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THE BOOKMAN

THE PASSING OF THE CHRISTMAS GHOST STORY

BY STEPHEN LEACOCK

IT is a nice question whether Christmas, in the good old sense of the term, is not passing away from us. One associates it somehow with the epoch of stage-coaches, of gabled inns and hospitable country homes with the flames roaring in the open fireplaces. To appreciate a Christmas gathering one must have fought one's way to it on horseback through ten miles of driving snow, or ridden in an ancient closed coach wheel-deep in melting slush. To arrive off a suburban trolley, punctual to the minute, won't do. Somehow the magic is out of it. I often think that half the charm of Christmas, in literature at least, lay in the rough weather and in the physical difficulties surmounted by the sheer force of the glad spirit of the day. Take, for example, the immortal Christmases of Mr. Pickwick and his friends at Dingley Dell and the uncounted thousands of Christmas guests of that epoch of which they were the type. The snow blustered about them. They were red and ruddy with the flush of a strenuous journey. Great fires must be lighted in the expectation of their coming. Huge tankards of spiced ale must be warmed up for them. There must be red wine basking to a ruddier glow in the firelight. There must be warm slippers and hot cordials and a hundred and one little comforts to think of as a mark of gratitude for their arrival; and behind it all, the lurking fear that some fierce highwayman might have fallen upon them as they rode in the darkness of the wood.

Take as against this a Christmas in a New York apartment with the guests arriving by the subway and the elevator, or with no greater highwayman to fear than the taxicab driver. Warm them up with spiced ale? They're not worth it.

Can one wonder, then, that the older "literature of Christmas" is passing away? And most of all, the good old Christmas ghost story, parent of a thousand terrors. How well one recalls its awful apparatus—its "figures" and its "apparitions", the "hollow voice" in which they spoke and the way in which, as the culminating terror, the figure "disappeared through the wall"! A humble trick it seems in these days to eyes that have watched Charlie Chaplin run up the side of a ten-story building and disappear into the sky.

Yet the people of the Victorian

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age, when ghost stories were ghost stories, loved nothing better than to get round a blazing fire as the night grew late and listen to a tale of "apparitions" and "figures" till even the stoutest of them took up his tallow candle to go to bed in a fit of the shudders, or, more dreadful and more delicious still, to read the awful tale in bed itself and by the uncertain light of the taper.

How well one recalls the opening and the setting of such an old-time ghost story.

"I am not what one would call a nervous man", so the story used to begin, "yet there was something in the gloomy aspect of Buggam Grange, as one approached it from the dark avenue of silent spruce trees, that might well strike a chill, etc., etc."

And how well one remembers this Buggam Grange! Evening is always "just falling" as one approaches it. The wind is "soughing" among its ancient chimneys. The house is wrapped in darkness save for a dim light here and there that struggles (I think "struggles" is the word) through the casement of a closed window. The "East Wing"—the very name invites a shudder at once—stands gloomy and untenanted.

Such is Buggam Grange as we approach it upon our wearied horse. No, we are not nervous but Buggam Grange more or less "puts us to the bad" at sight. Yet imagine how different if we came buzzing up to Buggam Grange in a hundred-horsepower car: if Buggam Grange had electric light streaming out of its windows. Moaning of the wind! One would never hear it in the noise of the car. C nat if one did? One would merely ask to use the telephone for a minute and call up the emergency plumber of Buggam Hampstead and say: "Hullo, this is Buggam Grange speaking. The wind is soughing rather badly round one of our chimney tops. Will you please send up a man? Thank you."

But in the days of the great darkness, before electricity was, Buggam Grange was a fearsome place indeed. Note our mode of entry to it. The door is unchained and we are admitted by a "solitary servant"; he is the "faithful butler" of the Buggam family: he has been in their service as boy and man for fifty years: he shakes his aged head with mournful foreboding as he lights us to our room in the dreaded East Wing. No one has slept in it for fifty years: none, in fact, since that dreadful night fifty years ago—and it was, by the strangest of coincidences, also a Christmas Eve—when Sir Duggam Buggam stabbed his best friend in the Tower room over a game of cards. If it had been auction bridge we could have understood it, if he had stabbed all his best friends. But when we remember it was cribbage, it seems hard to understand. Yet they hanged Sir Duggam for his crime at the assizes fifty years ago, and the villagers in Buggam Hampstead still tell strange stories of lights seen and voices heard in the East Wing of the Grange at Christmas time!

Can you wonder that when we are lighted to bed in that very Tower room, and remember this is Christmas Eve—exactly fifty years after the murder, not forty-nine, fifty—something nearly approaching to a shudder goes through us? As for that aged butler who says good night to us with "another melancholy shake of his head" (it is his one stunt), any reader of Christmas ghost stories knows what happens to him. He will be found dead, of course, next morn-

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ing, stretched upon the floor of his pantry. Don't ask me what is going to kill him. It will never be known. That was the dreadful thing about these Buggam Grange stories. There was no explanation given. The faithful butler was found dead stretched at full length (not half-length or foreshortened in any way, full length) upon the floor. These, one must remember, were the days before Sherlock Holmes. Sherlock would have made short work of the butler. He would have tracked the marks that his boots had made on the cement floor of the pantry, and "solved" him in no time.

But I am anticipating in talking of the dead butler. He is not found till the morning. Let us turn to consider the things that used, in the old-fashioned ghost stories, to happen to ourselves in the haunted room in the East Wing. How familiar all the old mechanism sounds: and how silly it has all grown in the bright light of electricity.

We try in vain to compose ourselves to sleep. Somehow we can't sleep. Can one really wonder at it? In a damp old room with the wind soughing all over the place and the casement rattling and our ghastly "night light" (an invention of the devil used in the Victorian Age) throwing vast flickering shadows upon the ceiling. And the tapestry against the walls—I forgot the tapestry—moving slightly in the night wind! Put a modern reader in a room with those things and he'd leap out of bed in a frenzy, turn on the electric light, and grab the telephone and call for two plumbers and an upholsterer.

But in the Victorian days of the ghost story these things were denied. We had to lie in bed and tremble until at last we fall into a "fitful slumber".

Do we know how long we have slept? We don't. All that we know is that we are awakened by a sound that comes "from behind the wainscot"—a groaning. Our night light has flickered out. The room is in darkness and there is no electric switch. And someone is groaning behind the wainscot! We are not, generally speaking, a nervous man, but we confess now to "a feeling of apprehension". Oh, yes.

We lie there. We *have* to: there is nothing else that we can do. And then somehow we become aware of a "presence" in the room. We do not see it or hear it or smell it, but we "become aware of it". This *presence* which figured in all the ghost stories of the old days, has now been overwhelmed and forgotten in the litter of new psycho-spiritual jargon: it has been replaced by "phantasms" and "phantograms" and such. But I do believe it was worse and more terrible when it was labeled simply a "presence". And we have become aware of it! The only thing is, has it become aware of us? Great Heavens, let us hope it hasn't.

Ah, but it has, it has! Look what happens next! It is now no longer merely a "presence". It has become a "figure". This is worse. A "figure", thin and impalpable as the night air, is moving about the room. It is illuminated by a "spectral light". It moves nearer to our bedside. It extends its hand. Oh, help! And now it is no longer a "figure". It has become an "apparition"—look! It is the apparition of Sir Duggam Buggam! The face is "grave and sad". Apparitions' faces always are: it is something in the life they lead that does it. The apparition points with its shadowy hand to the ghastly mark about its neck, the mark left by the

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hangman's noose. We can feel our hair rise on end, on both ends, and then — "a prolonged and ghastly shriek is heard to resound from somewhere in the house below".

This is enough. We quit. In the words of the original stories "our senses leave us" and we "know no more".

When we awake, the "bright sun" is streaming in at the windows, and the birds (who would have thought that there were birds at Buggam Grange!) are singing outside the window.

"Workmen entering the house in the morning" (luckily they never went on strike then) find the body of the butler. Then the whole ghastly story comes out. Sir Duggam was innocent of the "foul deed". It was the butler, then a young man of twenty-five, who had stabbed the guest for the sake of the gold piled upon the cribbage table. Sir Duggam was found, insensible still from drink, beside the body. His protests were in vain. He was hanged. Note that in Victorian literature the fact that Sir Duggam was "insensible from drink"—now called "spiflocated"—was not held to his discredit. The butler's confession hidden away in a drawer of his pantry made all clear.

As to what killed the butler, or who gave the shriek, or what the apparition was doing in the room, don't ask me. These things came and went as vaguely and as inconsistently as the flickering of the night light. Explanations only spoil a story, anyway.

Such was the kind of stuff at which the Victorian reader loved to shudder. I have before me as I write a little, forgotten volume published in 1852, and labeled the "Night Side of Nature" by Catherine Crowe. A whole generation has shivered over its pages, blown out its bedside candle, and buried its head under the clothes in fear. Miss Crowe—or no, she must have been *Mrs.* Crowe; such a woman would have been snapped up like Scheherezade—spares her readers no horror. She won't even label her characters by their names in ordinary Christian fashion. Here, for instance, is a dreadful tale concerning "the uncle of a Greek gentleman, Mr. M—, traveling in Magnesia". I confess that the very name is too much for me. I admit that I'd hate to be away off in the heart of "Magnesia" with a Greek called M—. This story (I dare not read it, the beginning is enough) is in a chapter headed "Troubled Spirits". What do you know about that? And here is another chapter called "Haunted Houses", and a still more terrible looking one headed "Miscellaneous Phenomena". No man I think can be blamed for admitting that he lives in deadly fear of miscellaneous phenomena. We all do.

And now why is it that the ghost story should have passed away, or rather, why did it flourish just at the time when it did? Here, I think, is the reason. The ghost story flourished best at that period (the middle of the nineteenth century) because at that period people had lost the belief in ghosts, at least as a serious, everyday part of their creed. The wonderful revelations of natural science were hurrying the thinking world in a cheap and vainglorious materialism: an apparition was dismissed as a mere "phosphoresence"—a vastly different thing; a noise behind a wainscot was a rat; a "sense of melancholy foreboding" was a stomachache. Everything was known and labeled and assigned to its true place in the universe—except perhaps two

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or three awkward little problems which were bunched together as the "unknowable" and shoved into a corner.

In such a world there was no room for ghosts. Hence a ghost story was not a *true* story. It was a wild reversion of the imagination to the forgotten terrors of the past. In earlier days, in the middle ages, let us say, this was not so. A ghost story was a *true* story. It might be very terrible, yet it was after all merely a statement of terrible fact, not a wild terror of the imagination. If a man related that an evil spirit had appeared to him in the night, he meant exactly what he said. It was a plain statement of a distressing fact. It was just as if a man said nowadays that his tailor had turned up at his house in the day—the same sort of thing. It was a bothersome thing and might mean a lot of trouble to come, but there was nothing in the relation of it that involved the wide-eyed terror of the nineteenth century. The materialist, in his horrors of the night, paid the penalty of his vainglory by day.

And now the scene has changed again. The ghosts have all come back. They are buzzing round us all the time. Oliver Lodge and Conan Doyle have seen bunches of them. They think nothing of them. It appears that one can talk to them by telepathy, or by table-rapping, or with a ouija board or in a dozen ways: and then when one does, their poor minds are so enfeebled from living behind the wainscot that one can feel nothing but pity for their simple talk. One respects them in a way: they are a religious lot: they like to talk of how bright and beautiful it is behind the wainscot, but in point of intellect they are—there is only one word for it—"mutts".

As to a ghost story as an engine of terror under such circumstances, the mere idea becomes ludicrous. The modern guest in the East Wing would come calmly down to breakfast and say as he took his porridge—"There was an apparition in my room last night", in the same way that he would have spoken if there had been a bat in it. "Oh, I do hope it didn't disturb you?" says the hostess at the coffee pot. "Oh, not at all, I chased it out with a tennis racket." "Poor things", murmurs the lady, "but we don't like to get rid of them altogether. Teddy and Winifred are making a little collection of notes about them and their father's going to send it to the Psychical Research. But I do dislike the children sitting up at night in the ruined tower in the wood. It's so damp for them. Two lumps?"

So the ghost story is dead. Let it rest in peace—if it can.

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TAHITI FROM MELVILLE TO MAUGHAM

BY H. T. CRAVEN

THUS far the Pacific Ocean has escaped. No doubt the war held up the literary map-maker as it did so many other earnest workers. But there is now no just impediment to a thorough charting of the far-flung fiction (tastily seasoned with fact) of the South Seas. I don't mean still another version of a pious pilgrimage to Vailima, but the real thing. "Literary Landmarks of the Pacific" (or should it be "Lighthouses"?) is the inevitable volume, neatly fashioned to fit in a series, adorned with accurate plans, solidified with an extensive bibliography and indefeasible cross-references. The Melville centenary furnishes an admirable excuse for the compilation. I must confess, however, that I never noticed the gap in the cartography of fiction—although I am a "Moby Dick" fan—until the publication of W. Somerset Maugham's "The Moon and Sixpence" coincided so significantly with the season of honors paid to the memory of the most romantic of whalers. And even then it wasn't the surge of the Pacific in the novel, the short story, and the semiautobiographical romance which aroused me, but the striking persistence with which literary art has favored a single picturesque island. France owns it as she does so many of the earth's beauty spots. Tahiti is its authorized name today. It was Otaheite on the lips of ancient mariners. One of the first of them to see it called it New Cytherea. The word painting was not florid. Barataria in Sancho Panza's mind was never half so witching. Its charm emboldens me to illustrate the diversity of the isle's appeal.

The coming cataloguer of the peaks of Pacific fiction may personally retrace each line of the fascinating rovings of the "Casco", the "Janet Nichol", or the "Equator". He may check up the cruise of the "Snark", or sail in the wake of Louis Becke. I have never crossed the international date line. I have never seen Sydney Head. But I do happen to have dwelt awhile in incomparable Tahiti, and when Mr. Maugham proceeded to turn actualities into fiction it gave me a reminiscent thrill.

Those who knew the artist, Paul Gauguin, cannot fail to be moved when they encounter his thinly-veiled figure in "The Moon and Sixpence". Strickland was a powerful imaginative creation to me. The novelist's "Tiaré Johnson", however, was an enlivening and substantial fact.

"Oh, I din think to see nobody come here in this war!" she crowed, as I plumped two valises in the veranda kitchen and prosaically inquired what the rents were in paradise. And I "din think" that I was dickering with the singular and engaging blend of Mrs. Boffin, a female Vatel, and Dame Quickly—famed as the best cook and heartiest hostess in all the Pacific's wide expanse, and destined to be realistically portrayed in a mordant novel by the frothiest of London's dramatists.

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Maugham's description of the presiding genius (in her way) of perfumed Tahiti is accurate in all but nomenclature. She might have been Tiaré Johnson. The name has a flavorful South Sea swing. She was in fact Lovina Chapman, the half-caste, prodigiously stout proprietress of the "Hotel" Tiare in lotus-land. Maugham sensed her picturesqueness unerringly. The rest of the cosmopolitan array of romantics responded to other inspiration magnets—the most astonishing variety of them—for nearly all of these chroniclers of the isle have written with the utmost disregard of each other, and seem to have been serenely unaware that Tahiti ever had more than a single literary discoverer.

Herein lies the peculiarity of the Tahiti complex. In his "The Wrecker" —a South Sea, but not a Tahiti tale— Stevenson recognizes Charles Warren Stoddard. Loudon Dodd meets, but does not name him in San Francisco. "It was in such talks", he declares, "which we were both eager to repeat, that I first heard the names—first fell under the spell—of the islands, and it was from one of the first of them that I returned (a happy man) with 'Omoo' under one arm and my friend's book under the other." Melville has his place in the Stevenson letters. But the verses and tales are almost void of recognition of an inspired predecessor tilling the Tahitian soil.

Loti is even more monopolistic. In "Le Mariage de Loti" ("Rarahu" in the English version) he writes as the lone explorer of the Polynesian Arcadia. Not only that, but the exquisite master of "atmosphere" mendaciously maintains that the enchanted Tahiti which he knew has vanished forever. The self-satisfied sniff of disdain at time's flight and modernity's march, which so often characterizes the pages of "La Mort de Phylae", is sounded in a typically Lotian footnote. "Queen Pomaré", he bleats, "died in 1877, leaving the throne to her second son, Ariiaue. One can date from this time the beginning of the end of Tahiti from the point of view of local color, charm and strangeness."

Rubbish!

"Le Mariage de Loti" is a little masterpiece, tender, wistful, exquisite in haunting pathos and exotic appeal. It was responsible for one of the most tenacious *noms de plume* in fiction. The loti, like the tiaré, is a delicate and lovely flower of the island. Its fragrance has pervaded the literary style of Julien Viaud for many a year, whether he has written of Morocco, of Palestine, of the Bosphorus, or of the Nile. But the gifted Frenchman did not excommunicate Tahiti from the province of poetry or tale telling. He simply exemplified the odd absence of any chain of literary tradition in the "New Cytherea".

Maugham takes quite the other tack. Brilliantly cynical about civilized human nature, nature without the adjectives disarms him completely. His discrediting of Loti's depressing forecast is emphatic. He treats his theme as though it were indeed Ultima Thule. There is no hint that this chief island of the Society group is regularly served by adequate steamships, that tall wireless towers wink their messages to civilization and receive crisp little summaries of the world's news each day, no suggestion that tiny Papeete "City" ranks as a Polynesian Paris. However, the sheer objective beauty of the place naturally baffles a statistician. Maugham refuses to impinge on consular reports. He tells what he saw and tells it truly

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when he asserts that "Tahiti is a lofty green island with deep folds of a darker green in which you divine silent valleys; there is mystery in their silent depths, down which murmur and plash cool streams, and you feel that in these umbrageous places life from immemorial times has been led according to immemorial ways." "Tahiti", he adds, "is smiling and friendly; it is like a lovely woman graciously prodigal of her charm and beauty, and nothing can be more conciliatory than the entrance into the harbor of Papeete."

I am assuming, of course, that the author, like most of the would-be monopolizing chroniclers, has actually seen Tahiti. The fact is virtually self-evident in the Lovina portrait. "She loved", he says, "three things—a joke, a glass of wine, and a handsome man. To have known her is a privilege." It is more so than ever now. Mrs. Chapman—in her belated literary dress, Tiaré Johnson—succumbed to the influenza epidemic which proved last autumn that the isle was earthly after all. I should like to know what became of her paintings and also whether Maugham was thinking about them when he described the chromo "art" of Dirk Stroeve. Certainly they owed nothing to Gauguin, notwithstanding that his prolonged visits to Tahiti wrought so profound an effect on his own work.

Pictorial art in Tahiti has gone the same erratic and independent way as literature. Gauguin was but hazily remembered when I was there. Another roving painter, Ebbe Kornerup of Copenhagen, was then at work, assuming to know or care little about his French predecessor. Kornerup also penned his own Tahitian tale in the mood which intimated that none other had ever been evolved. The island was suavely and blandly indifferent to him on both counts.

It was otherwise with Lovina's products. In 1914, on that tremendous day—for the South Seas—when the German cruisers "Scharnhorst" and "Gneisenau" wantonly bombarded bright little Papeete and laid much of it in ruins, pangs for this native art were poignantly felt. Æsthetic Johnny told me that his first thought was of his mother's remarkable creations. Not until after the glad news of von Spee's defeat off the Falklands came over the wireless were "the Chapmans" brought back from their secure cache in the jungle, to be hung once more in the bungalow.

But "Art and Artists of Tahiti" will come later, also in a uniform series. Discoveries which had especial appeal for me in the South Seas concerned the amazing divergence in literary interpretations. Every visitor with a ready pen seems to have viewed the place from a different angle.

Maugham, it is true, rather overdoes the leprosy business, but on the whole he brings the unbiased talent of a literary photographer to bear on his final scenes. Melville is laudatory and pictorially correct in his "dated" "Omoo". "It seems", he says, "a fairy world, all fresh and blooming from the hand of the creator." It would be rash to dispute that verdict of 1842. Nevertheless, for all the salt-sea simplicity of style, antedating the rapturous transcendentalism of "Moby Dick" and the fog of "Pierre", "Omoo" is written rather in the manner of a first discoverer. One feels that Melville was the true explorer, not Captain Cook—the sole stranger who seems to have made any impression on the place—De Bougainville or Wallis. Melville has the pioneer's

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trick of misspelling most of the native names.

Ellis's exhaustive and exhausting "Polynesian Researches" receives prefatory credit as a source book; but, happily, the impression that Melville wrote from his own fresh and vigorously individual point of view is indelible.

That, of course, is one of the many reasons why "Omoo" has lived. Borrovians should understand the sort of enthusiasm which Melville prompts in his admirers. Indeed Borrow and the author of "Omoo", notwithstanding the lack of unbending sectarian prejudice in the latter, have certain telling similarities. The dusky Romany folk and the comely "café-au-lait" Polynesians, as contrasted with the routine social order of Anglo-Saxons, had some delightful points in common. Borrow extols the splendid gipsy, Isopel Berners; Melville in his Marquesan "Typee", the enchanting and amiable Fayaway. A theme for the analogue dealer is available.

Stevenson accepted Melville as a classic. His affectionate tendency to "play the sedulous ape" had vanished in his South Sea period. His Tahiti is not altogether a pleasant land. The luxuriant loveliness of the tropics embarrassed his art.

Once only he brought all his lustrous literary pigments into full play —upon Atwater's shimmering atoll in "The Ebb Tide". "If my island ain't a thing of beauty", he wrote Colvin, "I'll be damned." But all the most sincere and conscious effort failed to make those Pacific scenes, now collected in the volume "In the South Seas", sparkle as he wished. Yet if it could not be in light, then Tahiti insisted on recognition in shadow. Samoa could be snubbed. Vaguely and in only a single bit of fiction does Stevenson honor it.

The Marquesas score once in the interest-whetting opening chapter of "The Wrecker". Tahiti makes a triple play—in "The Bottle Imp", "The Ebb Tide", and the verse narrative, "The Song of Rahero". All three scenes have some somber shading. The last, however, which does not eschew the radiant tropical charm, is on the whole the least successful:

> On the left with smoke as of battle, the billows battered the land.
> Unscalable, turreted mountains rose on the inner hand.—

sings the poet in that haunting legend. Tati Salmon, hereditary chieftain, told him the native story. When I met the dark and handsome Tati, he asked whether I wasn't weary of walking so far along the Broom road which skirts the opalescent seacoast. Didn't I want to climb into his motor car? It sounds disillusioning for one with his head full of Lotian idyls, but it really wasn't. The necromancy of Tahiti can even survive such blows.

The mystery which Loti felt, the appeal of strangeness to which Melville responded, can be found in the quoted lines and others of the "Rahero" ballad. The clear break comes in the two stories. "The Bottle Imp" proclaims Tahiti as "the wise island". But the sordid and sinister life portrayed there, especially in the climactic episode of the tipsy sailor—who declines to surrender the flask of perpetual inebriety even after he is informed of the curse which damns his soul—rather belies the flattering term. "The Ebb Tide" Tahiti is all gloom, present or impending. The beach is an influenza breeding place. The two beach-combers and the disgraced sea-captain have reached the depths of moral degradation. What

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has become of Loti's witching poetic prose and of Maugham's scenic investiture, fair in spite of the terrible Strickland?

It simply means that Stevenson ran true to Tahitian form. There is no literary descent in the island. Self-determination, utter independence of vision characterize the tale-weavers.

The Charles Warren Stoddard mood is exceedingly free. His "Otaheite" poem is conventional and pretty. It imparts a hint of Heredia. The precedent-breaking Stoddard voice is heard in "The Island of Tranquil Delights". That tale is frivolous, not to say skittish. Its chief object seems to be to have fun at the expense of the Yankee consul who was inclined to be supercilious.

Rupert Brooke is affectionately pert, lush as he writes of the "strange slumberous South Sea songs", vainly hopeful in his belief that he will some day return to "those good brown people". Yet all the while there is implied longing for a world that provides "conversations with Shaw, the Stravinsky comic opera, Gilbert Cannan's trial, Mansfield's latest knock-out farce".

Jack London dwells, with what seems to me fatuous emphasis, on his admiration for Darling, the freakish professional "nature-man", out of place, if ever a poseur was, in a land where spontaneous simplicity of life still is so readily to be found.

The armchair chroniclers are affected much as might be expected. It was Tahiti, the siren isle, which brought about the classic mutiny of the "Bounty" in 1789. Civilization seemed a palpable mistake beside the tropic paradise. That notorious crew was convinced of it. Captain Bligh, who was dismissed in an open boat, admits the spell. "The mutineers", he says, "had flattered themselves with the hope of a happier life among the Otaheitans than they could possibly enjoy in England—which joined to some female connections, most probably occasioned the whole transaction."

Some of the rebels mated in Tubuai, an island to the south of the Society group, but the majority won their brides in Tahiti. Eventually they reached remote Pitcairn's Island, and after a long carnival of license and debauchery, became oppressively religious.

Mark Twain sensed the food for satire and served it deliciously in "The Great Revolution in Pitcairn". Dickens recounts some of Bligh's adventures in "The Wreck of the Golden Mary". Byron wrote a long poem, "The Island", weaving a sham elemental love tale around a somewhat improbable mutineer and a rather less convincing Kanaka lass. Most of the scene is laid in Tubuai in the Australs, yet Tahiti has its innings—if scarcely in the poet's most inspired vein. "Huzza for Otaheite!" and a complimentary couplet on the bread-fruit, will hardly make a Byronist out of a reluctant reader. As an illustration, realized or otherwise, of the potency of the Tahiti complex, it is not a little startling to trace it (several times removed) even in "Peter Ibbetson".

> And Neuha led her Torquil by the hand
> And waved along the vault her flaming brand,—

incorrectly quotes (for the flame was "kindled" not "burning") the Duchess of Towers as she leads Peter through the dream palace at Passy. The lines are from "The Island". Torquil, as Byron conceived him, was one of the "Bounty's" crew.

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Henry Adams, whose educational argosy actually bore to Tahiti, wryly deposes as follows, in the chapter "Twenty Years After": "Yorkshire in January is not an island in the South Seas. . . . It has few points of resemblance to Tahiti." The ironic inversion is characteristic. So is Adams's voyage to the isle of the tiaré. It validates his wisdom. It enlists him in the inner circle of the wise men.

IN RESPECT TO JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER

BY JAMES BRANCH CABELL

SO say they, speak they, and tell they the tale, in "literary gossip", that Joseph Hergesheimer "wrote" for a long while before an iota of his typing was transmuted into "author's proof". And the tale tells how for fourteen years he could find nowhere any magazine editor to whose present needs a Hergesheimer story was quite suited.

And it is my belief that in approaching Mr. Hergesheimer's work one should bear constantly in mind those fourteen years, for to me they appear, not uncuriously, to have shaped and colored every book he has thus far published.

The actual merit of the writing done during that time is—here, at least—irrelevant. It is not the point of the fable that he high-heartedly wrote a story to which, when completed, his unbiased judgment could not quite honestly deny such deference as is due to a literary masterpiece; and which, through some odd error, was rejected by a magazine that every month was publishing vastly inferior stories; and which was later declined by another magazine, and by a host of magazines, with a dispiriting bland unanimity not unsuggestive of editorial conspiracy. Meanwhile—of course—he had written another tale, which was much better than the first, and which proved to be an equally faithful chaperon of return postage. So story followed story, each dreeing the same weird. . . .

And he used to wait for the postman, no doubt, and to note from afar that it was a large envelope; and would open the damned thing with a faint hope that perhaps they just wanted some slight changes made; and would find only the neat, impersonal, and civilly patronizing death-warrant of hope. So Joseph Hergesheimer kept on with his foolishness, without any gleam of success, or even (they report) any word of encouragement. And doubtless his relatives said the customary things. . . .

And none of these circumstances, either, is the point of the apologue, because in all save one detail the comedy has been abraded into pointlessness by over-constant repetition; and is, of course, being futilely performed at this moment in one prefers not to reflect how many thousand homes. The leading rôle, though, is too unprofitable and irksome for any quite sane person to persist in enacting it for fourteen years. This Joseph Hergesheimer did: and that is the fable's significant point.

For, weighing this just credible fact, it is not difficult to see why nearly all the men in Mr. Hergesheimer's

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books are hag-ridden by one or another sole desire which spurs them toward a definite goal at every instant of their mimic lives. These men but variously reflect, I take it, that younger Hergesheimer's "will to write", that unconquerable will. To Mr. Hergesheimer, even today, it probably seems natural that a man's whole living should be devoted to the attaining of one desire quite clearly perceived, because his own life was once thus dedicated. The more shrewd mass of practical persons that go about in flesh are otherwise; and comfortably fritter through the day, with no larger objective at any time in mind than the catching of a car, the rounding off of a business transaction, the keeping of an engagement for luncheon, and the vesperal attendance to some unmental form of recreation, with one small interest displacing another in endless succession, until bedtime arrives and the undertaker tucks them in.

It explains to me the Hergesheimer women, too, those troublingly ornamental odalisques. They are fine costly toys, tricked out in curious tissues: and, waiting for the strong male's leisure, they smile cryptically. They will divert him by and by, when the day's work is dispatched, maintaining their own thoughts inviolate, even in the instant of comminglement wherein the strongest man abates reserve: but their moment is not daylit, for the Hergesheimer women are little interested in what is done during office hours, nor are they to be valued then. Sometimes they are embodied ideals, to be sure, remotely prized as symbols or else grasped as trophies to commemorate the nearing of the goal: but for the most part they rank candidly as avocational interests. I find nowhere in Joseph Hergesheimer's stories any record of intimacy and confidence between a man and a woman. . . . And this too, I think, reflects that all-important formative fourteen years wherein, whatever may have been Mr. Hergesheimer's conduct of his relatively unimportant physical life, his fundamental concernments were pursued in a realm, of necessity, uninhabited by women. Indeed, no woman can ever quite willingly permit the man in whom she is interested to traffic in this queer, lonely realm, and she cannot but secretly regard his visits thereto as a personal slight. So the creative literary artist is (when luckiest) at silent feud with his women, because the two are perpetually irritated by the failure of their joint effort to ignore the fact that she ranks necessarily as an avocational interest.

II

What, though, was the precise goal of the fourteen years of visually unproductive "writing"? Those earlier stories have never been printed, so that one perforce advances on a bridge of guesswork. But certainly, in all that is today accessible of Mr. Hergesheimer's creative work—with one exception duly noted hereinafter—there is a patent negligence, and indeed an ostentatious avoidance, of any aiming toward popularity. That during the fourteen years young Hergesheimer labored toward the applause and checks of a "best seller", is to the considerate inconceivable. Nor could that well have been a motive strong enough to sustain him thus long, since the maker of reading-matter, like any other tradesman, has need of quick returns where the artist battens on immediate rejections.

No, Mr. Hergesheimer's monomania, one estimates, was then, just as it

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seems to be today, to write for his own delectation—in large part because he could not help it, and in part with the hope of, somehow and some day, obtaining an audience with the same or, at any rate, a kindred sense of beauty. . . . This, to be sure, is always a vain aspiration. That which, in effusions such as this, we loosely talk about as "beauty" probably does not exist as a vital thing save here and there in the thoughts of not too many and not to be too seriously taken persons. In life rather frequently one appears to catch a glimpse of something of the sort just around the corner or over the way, but it is rarely, and perhaps never, actually at hand. Sometimes, of course, one seems about to incorporate the elusive thing into one's daily living; and, striving, finds the attempt a grasping at an opalescent bubble, with the same small shock, the same disrupting disillusionment. And "beauty", thus, is by the judicious conceded to be an unembodiable thought, not even quite to be grasped by the mind; and certainly never nicely nor with any self-content to be communicated via the pages of a book, wherein are preserved, at best, the faded petals and the flattened crumbling stalks of what seemed lovely once to somebody who is as dead as are these desiccated relics of his ardor and of his disputable taste. In short, it may be granted — and by Mr. Hergesheimer most cheerfully of all persons—that during these fourteen years Mr. Hergesheimer was attempting the preposterously impossible.

Well, to my thinking, there is something curiously similar to that unreasonable endeavor to be found in all the Hergesheimer novels. Here always I find portrayed, with an insistency and a reiteration to which I seem to detect a queer analogue in the writings of Christopher Marlowe, men laboring toward the unattainable, and a high questing foiled. No one of the five novels varies from this formula. Anthony Ball strives toward the beauty of chastity—not morally concerned one way or the other, but resolute to preserve his physical purity for the sake of a girl whose body, he finds at last, has long ago been ravished by worms. Again there is no hint of moral-mongering—for Mr. Hergesheimer is no more concerned with moral values than is the Decalogue—when Gordon Makimmon toils toward the beauty of atonement, to die in all a broken man, with his high goal yet gleaming on the horizon untouched. The three black Pennys flounder toward the beauty of a defiant carnal passion, which through the generations scorches and defiles, and burns out futilely by and by, leaving only slag where the aspiring lovely fire was. And through the formal garden ways of Java Head pass feverishly at least five persons who struggle, and fretfully know their failure to be foredoomed, toward the capturing of one or another evincement of beauty, with the resultant bodily demolishment of three of them and the spiritual maiming of the others. That which one, for whatever reason, finds most beautiful must be sought; it is a goal which one seeks futilely, and with discomfort and peril, but which one seeks inevitably; such is the "plot" of these four novels. Such is also, as I need hardly say, the "plot" of the aforementioned fourteen years wherein not anything tangible was achieved except the consuming of youth and postage. . . . Nor does the dénouement differ, either, in any of these novels: the postman comes with the plethoric envelope which signals from afar that the result of much

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high-hearted striving is not quite suited to the present needs of this world's editor; and sometimes the postman is Age, but more often he is Death.

Now the fifth, and incomparably the finest and loveliest, of the Hergesheimer novels is "Linda Condon", which renders self-confessedly a story of "the old service of beauty, of the old gesture toward the stars"—"here never to be won, never to be realized" —of the service which "only beauty knows and possesses". . . .

III

But for the most part I am rattling very old bones. Those seemingly unfruitful fourteen years are today at one with those other fourteen years which brought an elder Joseph into Egyptian publicity. Mr. Hergesheimer has "arrived": his books have found their proper and appreciative audience; whereas his short stories are purchased, and probably read, along with the encomiums of ready-made clothing and safety razors, by I forget how many millions. . . . Now here, I think, one finds stark provocations of uneasiness. I speak with diffidence, and am not entirely swayed, I believe, by the natural inclination of every writer to backbite his fellow craftsman. In any event, dismissing "Gold and Iron" with very hearty applause, I take up "The Happy End"; and of the seven stories contained therein six seem to me to display a cornerstone of eminently "popular" psychology, ranging from the as yet sacrosanct belief that all Germans are perfectly horrid people to the axiom that the quiet and unrespected youngest brother is invariably the one to exterminate the family enemies, and duly including the sentiment that noble hearts very often beat under ragged shirts. And I am made uneasy to see these uplifting faiths—these literary baking-powders more properly adapted to the Horrible Trites and the Gluepot Stews among reading-matter confectioners — thus utilized by a Joseph Hergesheimer. I am made uneasy because I reason in this way: when Mr. Hergesheimer consciously is writing a short story to be printed next to advertising matter in some justly popular periodical, Mr. Hergesheimer, being rational and human, cannot but think of the subscribers to that popular periodical. I forget, I repeat, how many millions of them have been duly attested upon affidavit to exist, but certainly not many thousands of our fellow citizens can regard Mr. Hergesheimer at his best and purest with anything save bewildered abhorrence. So he must compromise—subconsciously, I believe —and must adapt his methods to the idiosyncrasies and limitations of his audience, very much as he probably refrains from addressing his cook in the heightened and comminuted English of "Linda Condon".

The danger, mark you, is not that Joseph Hergesheimer will lower his ideals, nor in anything alter what he wishes to communicate; but is the fact that he must attempt to transmit these things into the vernacular and into the orbits of thought of his enormous audience, with the immaculate motive of making his ideas comprehensible. He cannot, being rational and human, but by and by be tempted yet further to endeavor—as he has flagrantly endeavored in the tale called "Tol'able David"—to convey his wayside apprehensions of life via some such always acceptable vehicle as the prehistoric fairy-tale cliché of the scorned and ultimately victorious third champion. This is with a vengeance

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the pouring of new wine into a usage-battered and always brazen cup which spoils the brew. . . . Six of these stories, then, are beautifully written moral tales: although, to be sure, there is an alleviating seventh, in "The Flower of Spain", which is a well-nigh perfect and a profoundly immoral work of art. I therefore put aside this volume with discomfort and turn to the reflection that Mr. Hergesheimer has since written "Linda Condon", which discomforts me quite as poignantly by exposing to me my poverty in phrases sufficiently noble to apply to this wholly admirable book.

Yet Mr. Hergesheimer, even in the least worthy of his magazine stories, writes really well. The phrase has an inadequate ring: but when you have applied it without any grave reservation to Mr. Tarkington and Mr. Hergesheimer, and have given Mrs. Wharton a deservedly high rating for as many merits as seem possible to a woman writer, of what other American novelists can this reasonably be said by anybody save their publishers? The remainder of us, whatever and however weighty may be our other merits, can manage, in this matter of sheer writing, to select and arrange our adjectives and verbs and other literary ingredients acceptably enough every now and then: and that is the utmost which honesty can say.

But Mr. Hergesheimer always writes really well, once you have licensed his queer (and quite inexcusable) habit of so constantly interjecting proper names to explain to whom his, Hergesheimer's, pronoun refers. . . . Perhaps I here drift too remotely into technicalities, and tend to substitute for a consideration of architecture a treatise upon brick-making. Even so, I cannot but note in this place how discriminatingly Mr. Hergesheimer avoids the hurdles most commonly taken with strained leaps by the "stylist", through Mr. Hergesheimer's parsimony in the employment of similes; and how inexplicably he renders "anything from a chimneypot to the shoulders of a duchess" by—somehow—communicating the exact appearance of the thing described without evading the whole issue by telling you it is like something else.

This is the more remarkable when you consider how intensely Joseph Hergesheimer realizes the sensuous world of his characters and, above all, the optic world. He is the most insistently superficial of all writers known to me, in his emphasis upon shapes and textures and pigments. His people are rendered from complexion to coat-tail buttons, and the reader is given precisely the creasing of the forehead and the pleating of all underlinen. Mr. Hergesheimer's books contain whole warehousefuls of the most carefully finished furniture in literature; and at quaint bric-à-brac he has no English equal. It is all visioned, moreover, very minutely. Joseph Hergesheimer makes you observe his chairs and panelings and wall-papers and window-curtains with an abnormal scrutiny. The scenery and the weather, too, are "done" quite as painstakingly, but these are indigenous to ordinary novels. Now of course, like virtually every other practise of "realism", this is untrue to life: nobody does in living regard adjacent objects as attentively as the reader of a Hergesheimer story is compelled to note them. For one, I cannot quite ignore this fact, even when I read with most delight: and I sometimes wonder if Mr. Hergesheimer premeditatedly sits down to study an andiron or a fan for literary use, or whether his personal existence is actually given

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over to this concentration upon externals and inanimate things. But he was once a painter; and large residuals of the put-by art survive.

All this results, of course, in a "style" to which the reader is never quite oblivious. The Hergesheimer dramas are enacted, with a refining hint of remoteness, behind the pellucid crystal of this "style", which sharpens outlines, and makes colors more telling than they appear to everyday observation, and brings out unsuspected details (seen now for the first time by the reader, with a pleasurable shock of delight), and just noticeably glazes all. The Hergesheimerian panorama is, if I may plagiarize, a little truer than truth: and to turn from actual life to Joseph Hergesheimer's pages arouses a sensation somewhat akin to that sustained by a myopic person when he puts on his spectacles.

IV

Such, then, are this artist's materials: in a world of extraordinary vividness a drama of high questing foiled, a tragedy of beauty sought, with many blunders but single-mindedly, by monomaniacs,—in fine, a performance suggestively allied, in its essentials, to the smaller-scaled and unaudienced drama of the young man with the percipient eyes of a painter, who throughout fourteen years was striving to visualize in words his vision of beauty, and who was striving to communicate that vision, and who —the tastes of the average man being that queer slovenly aggregation which makes the popular periodical popular, and the ostensible leaders of men being regular subscribers to the slatternly driveling host—was striving in vain.

These things are but the raw materials, I repeat—the bricks and mortar and the scantlings—for, of course, there is in Joseph Hergesheimer's books far more than plot or thought, or even "style": there is that indescribable transfiguring element which is magic. When Linda Condon came to look closely at Pleydon's statue, you may remember, she noted in chief the statue's haunting eyes, and marveled to find them "nothing but shadows over two depressions." Now very much the equivalent of that is the utmost to which one can lay a crude finger in appraising Mr. Hergesheimer's books. They are like other books in that they contain nothing more prodigious than words from the nearest dictionary put together upon quite ordinary paper. . . . But the eyes of Pleydon's statue —you may remember, too—for all that they were only indentations in wet clay, "gazed fixed and aspiring into a hidden dream perfectly created by his desire." And viewing the statue, you were conscious of that dream, not of wet clay: and you were moved by the dream's loveliness as it was communicated, incommunicably, by Pleydon's art.

Well, the art of the real Hergesheimer, the fundamental and essential thing about Joseph Hergesheimer, is just that intangible magic which he ascribes to his fictitious Pleydon. And the dream that Joseph Hergesheimer, too, has perfectly created by his desire, and seeks to communicate in well-nigh every line he writes, I take to be "the old gesture toward the stars . . . a faith spiritual, because, here, it is never to be won, never to be realized."

It is, I think, the "gesture" of the materially unproductive fourteen years: and its logic, either then or now, is clearly indefensible. Still, one agrees with Cyrano, *Mais quel geste!* and one is conscious of "a warm

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indiscriminate thrill about the heart" and of a treacherous sympathy, which abhors reason. . . .

And it is through distrust of this beguiling sympathy that I have spoken throughout with self-restraint, and have hedged so often with "I think" and "I believe" and "it seems to me", and have niggled over Hergesheimerian faults that are certainly tiny and possibly non-existent: because of my private suspicion that all my private notions about Joseph Hergesheimer are probably incorrect. To me, I confess, he appears a phenomenon a little too soul-satisfying to be entirely credible. Pure reason does not brevet it as humanly possible that the Hergesheimer I privately find in the pages of the Hergesheimer books should flourish in any land wherein the self-respecting author is usually restricted to choose between becoming the butt or the buttress of mediocrity: so that I cautiously refrain from quite believing in this Joseph Hergesheimer as a physical manifestation in actual trousers. . . . Indeed, his corporeal existence cannot well be conceded except upon the hypothesis that America has produced, and is even nourishing, a literary artist of the first rank. Which is absurd, of course, and a contention not to be supported this side of Bedlam, and, none the less, is my firm private belief.

MEMORANDUM CONFIDED BY A YUCCA TO A PASSION VINE

BY AMY LOWELL

THE Turkey-buzzard was chatting with the Condor
High up in the White Cordillera.
"Surely our friend the fox is mad," said he.
"He chases birds no more and his tail trails languidly
Behind him in the dust.
Why, he got it full of cactus-spines one day,
Pawing over a plant that stood in his way.
All the bees are buzzing about it.
Consider a fox who passes by the great hives of sharp, black honey
And looks at them no more than a heron would."
"Odd," said the Condor. "Remarkably peculiar."
And he flapped his wings and flew away to the porcelain peaks of the distant Sierra.
So the Turkey-buzzard thought no more of the matter,
But busied himself with the carcass of a dead llama.

And the sun boomed onward over the ice-peaks:
Hot—Hot—Hotter!

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And the sun dropped behind the snow-peaks,
And the cool of shadow was so delicious that all the squirrels and rabbits and guinea-pigs and lizards
Flirted their tails;
And the flamingoes in Lake Titicaca puffed out their gizzards,
And waded into the pink water reflected from the carmine-tinted mountain summits;
And the parrots chattered and flashed in the mimosas;
And the eagles dove like plummets
Upon the unfortunate alpacas.
The animals were enjoying themselves in the rose-red light that lingers
Flung from the blood-orchid tips of the mountains
Before the night mists slide over the foothills.
Ah! But you could see them in the valleys,
Floating and circling like dead men's fingers
Combing living hair.

In a place of bright quartz rocks,
Sits a small red fox.
He is half in the shade of a cactus-bush.
The birds still fly, but there is a hush
And a sifting of purple through the air:
Blue dims rose,
The evening is fair.
Why is the red fox waiting there,
With his sniffing nose,
And his stiffened pose,
And his narrow eyelids which never close?
"Fox—fox—
Against the rocks.
Are you rooted there till the equinox?"
So the alcamarines flocking home in the afterglow
Mock the poor fox, but he doesn't seem to know.
He sits on his haunches staring high
Into the soft, fruit-green evening sky.

A yellow rose blooms in the glow,
Thin fox frosted by silver snow,
Mica-crystals flecking over indigo.
And a cactus-tree
Grating its thorn-leaves huskily.
Moan of wind and the crackles of an empty place
At the coming of night,
The fox is alone.
Then in the far green heavens the lady rises, tall and white.
August and dazzling

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In the drooping light,
She shimmers, jubilantly bright.
Breasts and thighs tuned to liquid air,
Loveliness set naked in a firmament.
He sees the slim, smooth arms,
And the virgin waist bending with delicate movement.
Her body sways as a flower stem
Caught in a gust;
And her hair is thrust
Towards him, he can see the gem
Which binds it loosely. His eyes are greedy
Of the curving undulations and straight fall
Following down from head to foot, and all
Cool and unclouded, touching him almost.
With hot tongue he pants upon the splendor
Of this marble beauty, imperious and unashamed
In her extreme of excellence.
Then he weeps,
Weeps in little yelping barks for the cold beautiful body
Of the inaccessible moon.
The villagers wake in a startled fright
And tell each other: "A fox bays the moon tonight."

The moon lives in Cuzco—
It was the Partridge who told him so—
In a temple builded of jointured stone
On an emerald-studded, silver throne.
So the fox set out for Cuzco with his tail held high to keep it out of the dust.

Tramp! Tramp! Tramp!
What is that noise approaching him?
Quick, behind a stone,
And he watches them come,
The soldiers of the great Inca.
Copper spear-heads running like a river of gold along the road.
Helmets of tiger-skins, coats of glittering feathers,
A ripple of colors from one edge of the way to the other.
Feet of men cadenced to the swing of weapons.
So many bows, and arrows, and slings, and darts, and lances,
A twinkling rhythm of reflections to which the army advances,
And a rainbow banner flickering colors to the slipping of the wind.

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They pass as water passes and the fox is left behind.
Those men come from Cuzco, thought the fox,
And his heart was like lead in his stomach for wondering if they knew the moon.
Then he trotted on again with his tail held high to keep it out of the dust.

Pat! Pat! Pat!
What is that sound behind him?
He leaps into a bush of tufted acacia just in time.
It is a post-runner, doing his stint of five miles,
Carrying merchandise from the coast.
And the fox's mouth waters as he smells fish:
Bobos, shads, sardines,
All fading in a little osier basket,
Faint colors whispering the hues of the rainbow flag.
But the runner must not lag,
These fish are for the Inca's table.
A flash of feet against the heart-shaped flowers of the yolosuchil
And the jarred leaves settle and are still.
The fox creeps out and resumes his journey, with his tail held high to keep it out of the dust.

Over bush and bramble and prick and thorn
Goes the fox, till his feet are torn,
And his eyes are weary with keeping the trail
Through ashen wind and clattering hail,
With the hot, round sun lying flat on his head,
And morning crushing its weight of lead
On scores of trumpet-vines tangled and dead.
Across swung bridges of plaited reeds
In a whorl of foaming, bursting beads
Of river mist, where a cañon makes a fall
Of thousands of feet in a sheer rock wall.
Pomegranates toss him scarlet petals,
The little covetous claws of nettles
Catch at his fur, and a sudden gloom
Blocks his path on a drip of bloom.
Over prick and thorn and bush and bramble;
Up pointed boulders with a slip and scramble,
Past geese with flattened, blue-green wings
Pulling the Ichu grass which springs
In narrow fissures where nothing else clings;
Through terraced fields of bright-tongued maize
Licking the hills to a golden blaze;
Under clustered bananas and scented oaks;
Across dry, high plains where the yucca chokes.
Dawns explode in bleeding lights

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On the snow-still uplands of ghastly heights
Where long dead bodies stare through their hair
Crooking their brittle legs and bare
Ice-tortured arms, and the sun at noon
Is a glassy shell of dull maroon.
Only at night he watches the moon
Stepping along the smooth, pale sky
In a silver florescence. By and by
The red fox reaches the gates of Cuzco,
But his tail is very much bedraggled for he can no longer hold it up out of the dust.

Morning playing dimly in the passion-vines
Hanging over the gates of Cuzco.
Morning picking out a purple flower—
Another—another—
Cascading down the walls of Cuzco.
Scarlet-flashing, uprose the sun
With one deep bell-note of a copper-crashed gong.
Glory of rose-mist over the Sierra,
Glory of crimson on the tinted turrets
Of the wide old fort under the high cliff.
Glory of vermilion dripping from the windows,
Glory of saffron streaking all the shadows,
House fronts glaring in fresh young light,
Gold over Cuzco!
Gold!
Gold!
In an orchid flow.
Where the temple of Pachacamac rose like a bell
Shining on the city,
With the clear sweet swell of an open sunrise gong.
White and carnation,
White and carnation,
The sun's great gnomon,
Measuring its shadow on the long sharp gold polished grass.
Who pass here
In an early year?
Lightning and Thunder,
Servants of the Sun.
Lord of the rainbow's white and purple,
Blue and carnation,
All awhirl to a curl of gold.
He who comes from the land of monkeys,
He who comes from the flying fishes playing games with rainbow dolphins,
Pause—

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Here before the gates of gold.
Chamfered crown about the Temple,
Sparkling points and twisted spirals,
All of Gold.
Lemon-tinted Gold,
Red washed fire Gold,
Gold, the planking,
Gold, the roof-tree,
Gold the burnished doors and porches,
And the chairs of the dead Incas:
One long row of stately bodies
Sitting dead in all the dazzle
Glittering with bright green emeralds.
White-haired Incas,
Hoary Incas,
Black and shiny-haired young Incas,
All dead Incas;
With their hands crossed on their breasts
And their eyes cast down, they wait there.
Terrible and full-fleshed Incas.
Blaze of fire, burning, glaring,
Bright, too bright!
Ah—h—h!
The Sun!
Up through the wide-open eastern portal,
Broken, sharpened on a thousand plates of gold,
It falls,
Splintered into prisms on the rainbow walls.
The sun steps into his house.
Hush! It is the PRESENCE!
Face of Pachacamac,
Wreathed in burnished flames of swift fire.
Then on the wind of a thousand voices rises the hymn:
"Pachacamac
World's Creator,
Mountain-mover,
Heaven-dwelling.
We beseech thee
Send thy showers,
Warm our meadows,
Bless the seed-ears.
Man and woman,
Beast and lizard,
Feathered people,
Whales and fishes,
All implore thee,
Clement God-head,
To make fruitful

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These thy creatures.
String their sinews
Ripe for power,
Quicken wombs and
Eggs and rootlets.
Be the Father,
The Begetter.
Pour upon us,
Lord of all things,
Of thy bounty,
Of thy fulness.
So we praise thee,
Swelling Apple,
Gourd of Promise,
Mighty Melon,
Seed-encaser,
Sun and Spirit,
Lord of Morning,
Blood of Mercy,
Pachacamac!"
And the great tide of men's voices echoed and curved upon the plates of gold
Lining the Temple,
So that it became a wide horn of melody
And out of it burst the hymn like a red-streaked lily thundering to the morning.
Men's voices singing the hymn of ripening seed,
Men's voices raised in a phallic chorus to the rising sun . . .
Virgin of the Sun,
Pale Virgin,
Through the twisting vine-leaves it comes to you broken and shivering.
What are you, Virgin?
And who is this all-wise God
That shuts you in a hall of stone?
Cleft asunder,
A white pomegranate with no seeds,
A peascod dropped on a foot-path before its peas are blown.
Pale Virgin, go about your baking,
For the shadows shorten and at noon the oven will be heated.

Tired little fox outside the fence,
Lie down in the shade of the wall,
For indeed the sun has done you an injury.

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Now the east wind, called Brisa, blew against the clouds;
And the sun rushed up the sky;
And at noon the shadow of the great gnomon was not,
No single dark patch lay anywhere about its foot,
For the God sat with all his light upon the column.
The fox awoke, and sought shelter from the heat.
Creeping, he came to a garden of five fountains,
Set in green plots, and plots of silver.
For there he saw, mixed, the fruits of the sun:
Apples, quinces, loquats, and chirimoyas,
All just after flowering with their fruit-balls perfectly formed but each smaller than a pepper-grain,
And the fruits of man:
Oranges, melons, cocoanuts and breadfruit,
Fashioned of gold and silver
Amazing with brightness.
Indian corn sprouted from the earth on thin stalks of gold
Which rattled against one another with a sweet clashing,
The golden ears escaping smartly out of broad recurved leaves of silver
And silver tassels floated in a twinkle of whiteness from their glittering tops.
Golden snails clung to silver palm-branches,
Turquoise butterflies flew hither and thither
And one alone remained poised; it was of polished stone.
The fox gaped for wonder and his tail lay prone on a silver lizard,
But this he never noticed.
Then across the sounds of leaves blowing
And metals tapping,
Came music;
A voice singing in a minor key,
Throaty and uncertain as a new-cut reed.
"Mama Quilla," it sang.
"Mother Moon,
Through the shell of heaven gliding.
Moon of many stars and brothers,
Mistress of the bright-haired rainbow,
Wife and sister of the Sun-god,
Virgin moon who bore him children.
If you die then do we perish.
Mama Quilla,
I, a Virgin,

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Crave a blessing,
Ask a guerdon.
O, glorious, chaste, and immaculate moon,
Preserve me to my vows.
But, I implore thee,
Take from me, therefore, this my longing,
Let the Spring deal with me gently,
Still my spirit.
Or, devout and pitying mother,
Give me thunder,
Give me lightning,
Break me on a green-stone anvil,
So the flower of my body
Blow to loveliness a moment.
I am past my holding, Mama Quilla,
In the night I smell the strong scented blossoms of the daturas,
And my heart snares me in its loneliness."

So the fox crept up to the door where the Virgin of the Sun sat spinning.
"Can you tell me, Lady", said he, making a fine bow,
"If the moon lives here in Cuzco?"
Then the Virgin was afraid,
For she did not know that foxes spoke.
"Who are you", she demanded,
"And whence do you come?"
"I am a fox of the Western Country,
And I come from the water-passage of Lake Titicaca.
I love the moon,
I desire her more than the monkeys of the Eastern forests
Desire dates,
More than your kinsmen, the Incas,
Desire the land of the Machigangas.
She is more beautiful to me than red pepper-pods
To the shepherds who walk the mountains with their llamas.
I prize her more greatly than do the Aquarimas the shrunken skulls of their enemies.
She is a poison-tree of many branches:
With one, she brushes the waves of the ocean
So that all the shores are overflown with the sea at Spring tides;
And, with another, she tickles the nose of a tapir
Asleep in a grove of vanilla trees
On the banks of the Amazon;
And I have been blinded by the sweeping of a third

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Above a snow-cornice on Mount Vilcanota.
Oh, she has many branches
All dripping with silver-white poison,
And I have come here to drink this poison and die."
"But you cannot possess the moon;
It is sacrilege," cried the Virgin,
And her hands trembled so that the distaff fell to the ground.
"And it is sacrilege for a Virgin of the Sun to sing of the labors of women," said the fox.
Then the fox told of his watching, night and night, under the cactus-bush,
Of his great pains and hungering,
And the Virgin listened in a tiptoe of attention,
While the ruby humming-birds splashed fire across the silver ripple of the garden,
And the fountains sprang and recoiled,
And the sun sank behind the mountains of the sea.

Hush!
Hush!
In the House of Acllahua
The Mamacunas sleep,
The Virgins lie enmeshed in sleep.
Sleep folded on the House of Acllahua,
While the Sun, their master,
Dries the ocean with his swimming.
West to East, all night he swims,
And they in the House of Acllahua sleep.
Only she is waiting, fearing;
Now more gently, gently, gliding,
Through the fluttering silver flowers.
And the fox is waiting,
Sitting under a tamarisk-tree
With his hot tongue hanging out of his mouth.
Through the thin cloud of tamarisk leaves
Falls a tempered moonlight,
A feathered, partial moonlight,
A moonlight growing every moment stronger,
A shadow growing every minute blacker.
The Virgin and the fox under the black feathers of the tamarisk-tree,
While the moon walks with a stately slowness
Down the long quiet terraces of the sky.
Hush!
Hush!
The garden burns with cold, green fire,
A bat spots black on a gold sweet-briar,

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A polished rose on a stem of wire
Sweeps and bends, a blue flung ball
Palpitating,
Undulating,
All the trees and plants gyrating,
All the metals quivering to song
And the great palmettos beating gongs.
The low, slow notes of the water-reeds
Underscore the glass-sweet beads
Of the little clapping melon seeds.
Gold and silver strings of a lyre
Plucked by the wind, high pitched and higher,
And the silver moans with a tone of its own
Fragile as an ixia newly blown.
All the garden sways to a noise
Of humming metal in equipoise.
Stately dates sweep a merry-go-round.
The fountains spring in a sparkle of sound.
The moonlight falls in a heap on the ground.
And there is Light!
Light in a crowned effulgence
Thrown up from the flowers and trees,
Delicate, pearled light, barred by beautiful shadows.
Bloomed light, plunging upon the silver-roofed temple.
Open, open,
Door of the Temple of the Moon.
Come forth, dead mothers of dead Incas.
Slow procession of the dead
Filing out of the temple.
Mama Vello, mother of Huayna Capac,
Mama Runtu,
Mama Ocllo.
Feathered mantles brush the golden gravel,
Their hands are crossed on their breasts,
They are powdered with turquoises and raw-cut emeralds.
Slowly the Inca mothers form a ring,
They hold a golden chain
Long and broad as the great street of Cuzco.
Slowly they move in a circle,
Chanting.
Their steps are soft as weeping water.
Their voices are faint as snow dropping through Autumn dusk.
Suddenly, in the midst of the ring, a great fall of Light.
It is she—the MOON!
White mist circumvolves about her,

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On her head is a diadem of opal-changing ice,
And hoarfrost follows the stepping of her feet.
A single emerald, half white, half foaming green,
Clasps a girdle about her waist.
Terribly she dances in the ring of Inca mothers.
The garden turns with them as they move,
Winding and closing about them,
Impelling them toward the Temple,
Up to the Altar.
Trumpets, brazen and vainglorious,
Silver-striking, shouting cymbals,
Open horns, round gourd-drums beaten to a rattle of flame.
Movement, ghostly, perpetual,
And sound, loud, sweet, sucking from the four edges of the sky.
Everything swings, and sings, and oscillates, and curves.
Only the moon upon the high altar is still.
She stands, struck to immobility,
Then, without haste, unclasps the foaming emerald
And the mists part and fall . . .
Silence—
Silence spread beneath her as a footstool.
The flowers close;
The Inca mothers are dead corpses on their silver thrones.
But She!
Naked, white, and beautiful,
Poised and infinite;
Flesh,
Spirit,
Woman and Unparalleled Enchantment.
Moon of waters,
Womb of peoples,
Majesty and highest Queen.
So the Goddess burns in a halo of white-rose fire
For an instant. . .
Yelp! Yelp! Yelp!
The fox has burst from the Virgin's grasp.
Over the garden,
Up the aisle of the temple,
With staring eyes
And ghoulish, licking tongue.
Satyr fox assaulting the moon!
THUNDER!!!
Lightning serpents

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Wound in great circles above the Temple.
Sheets of lightning snarling from racing, purple clouds
And rain roaring down the hot walls of a copper sky.

The clouds splinter, and a ruined moon wavers up
into the heavens, about her are three great rings,
one of blood, one of black, and the utmost all of
stinging, glutinous, intorting coils of smoke.
Upon the disk of the moon are spots, black obscene
spots, the print of a fox's paws.

. . . . .

Bake your cakes of the sacred maize, Virgin,
Tend the flame the priest has gathered with his metal
sun-glass,
Weave feathered mantles for the Coya,
Burn holy gums to deaden the scent of the daturas.
If you and the moon have a secret,
Let it rest there.

THE STORY OF A CHRISTMAS STORY

BY HENRY LITCHFIELD WEST

THIS is a story of a Christmas story. It is inspired by the hope that it may induce the goodly company of THE BOOKMAN fellowship to join with me on Christmas morning in reading "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens. For many, many years, in the early hours of Christmas day, I have taken "A Christmas Carol" from its place upon the book-shelf and read it through from beginning to end—from the first line, "Marley was dead to begin with", to the last words, "God bless us, every one". And when I reach the page where Scrooge, awaking in the morning after his nocturnal wanderings with his ghostly companions, puts his head out of the window and asks a small boy if he knows what day it is, and the boy explodes with the answer, "It is CHRISTMAS DAY!" (always in small capitals), my pulse throbs faster, my heart beats more rapidly, and my eyes weep tears of delirious joy. I would not miss that thrill on Christmas morning for many, many dollars! There is no better way of putting one's soul in complete harmony with the joyous, generous festival. It is impossible to read the story without experiencing a thorough warming of the cockles of the heart. It makes one wish for Aladdin's lamp, so as to command a fortune large enough to carry Christmas into every home. Thackeray had this feeling, for in writing of the "Carol" he said it would unquestionably lead to the purchase of everything in all the shops!

When I read the story for the twentieth time on last Christmas morning, —the seventy-fifth anniversary of its first publication,—I realized that I

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knew nothing of its background. Instantly a score of questions framed themselves in my mind. When and where did Dickens write the story? What was its inspiration? Was there a real Scrooge, or Bob Cratchit, or Tiny Tim? Was the "Carol" appreciated by others as it was loved by me? Forthwith I began a quest which, for nearly a year, has been a delightful recreation. It has led me into many libraries and a multitude of old book stores; it has resulted in a delightful long-distance acquaintance with congenial book collectors; and, through correspondence, it has carried me into the sacred precincts of the British Museum. Perhaps there are others who, like me, having been thrilled by the conversion of Scrooge, softened by the tenderness of Tiny Tim, and cheered by the heartiness of Scrooge's nephew, will be glad to read the story again in the light of its environment. Some of these days, I hope to make my quest complete. I have never seen the original manuscript, nor even a first edition; nor have I been able to learn whether the characters were purely imaginary or drawn from life. There are many things yet to be done which are fully worth while, not the least being a monograph which will present, in far more detail than is permissible within the limits of this article, the story of the "Carol" from every angle.

Charles Dickens wrote many Christmas stories. All of them came from his heart. The season of gladness and cheer appealed to his emotional and sentimental nature. He was saturated with the Yuletide spirit; and these Christmas tales literally gushed forth from the well-springs of his soul. "My purpose", he says, in an introduction to one of the editions of the Christmas stories, "was, in a whimsical kind of mask which the good humor of the season justified, to awaken some loving and forbearing thoughts never out of season in a Christian land." We may well inquire, as Gilbert K. Chesterton has done, how it happened "that this bustling, nineteenth-century man, full of the almost cock-sure common sense of the utilitarian and liberal epoch, came to associate his name chiefly in literary history with the perpetuation of a half-pagan and half-Catholic festival." Mr. Chesterton's answer to the question is characteristic of his keen analytical mind. He specifies three qualities which explain the hold of Christmas upon the human sense of happiness—the dramatic quality, the contrast of indoor feasting and revelry with the discomforts of exterior wintry weather, and the element of the grotesque. "If we study", he says, "the real atmosphere of rejoicing and of riotous charity in 'The Christmas Carol', we shall find that all the three marks I have mentioned are unmistakably visible." The "Carol" is a happy story, he says, because it describes an abrupt and dramatic change. "It is not only the story of a conversion but of a sudden conversion." It is a tale of winter, with its comfort saved from enervation by a tingle of something bitter and bracing in the weather. "Lastly", says Chesterton, "the story exemplifies throughout the power of the third principle—the kinship between gaiety and the picturesque. Everybody is happy because nobody is dignified."

Dickens was thirty-one years old when, in the early part of October, 1843, he visited Manchester. It was during this tour that the idea of the "Carol" entered his mind. His fame had already been established by "Pickwick Papers", "Oliver Twist", "Nicholas Nickleby", and "The Old Curiosity

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Shop", and he was at work upon "Martin Chuzzlewit". He began the "Carol" while at Manchester, finishing it upon his return to 1 Devonshire Terrace, and completing the task in five or six weeks. The work was done under high pressure. He wrote to Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton that while he was writing the story he was so closely occupied with it "that I never left home before the owls went out, and led quite a solitary life". The tale completely obsessed him. He wrote to Professor Felton on January 2, 1844:

> Over which Christmas Carol Charles Dickens wept, and laughed, and wept again, and excited himself in the most extraordinary manner in the composition, and thinking whereof he walked about the black streets of London, fifteen and twenty miles, many a night when all the sober folks had gone to bed. . . . To keep the Chuzzlewit going, and to do this little book the "Carol" in the odd times between parts of it, was, as you may suppose, pretty tight work. But when it was done I broke out like a madman.

Published shortly before Christmas, 1843, by Chapman and Hall, on commission for the author, in one volume of foolscap octavo, one hundred and sixty-six pages, and containing four colored illustrations and four woodcuts by John Leech, the story was described on the title-page as "A Christmas Carol, in prose, being a ghost story of Christmas". The preface, dated December, 1843, was as follows:

> I have endeavoured in this Ghostly little book, to raise the Ghost of an Idea, which shall not put my readers out of humour with themselves, with each other, with the season, or with me. May it haunt their houses pleasantly, and no one wish to lay it.
>
> Their Faithful Friend and Servant,
>
> C. D.

The success of the book was instantaneous. Dickens, writing to Macready, characterized it as "prodigious—the greatest, I think, I have ever achieved". All manner of strangers wrote to him by every post "about their homes and hearths, and how this same 'Carol' is read aloud there, and kept on a little shelf by itself." Lord Jeffrey sensed the psychological value of the tale when he wrote to Dickens that "you may be sure you have done more good by this little publication, fostered more kindly feelings, and prompted more positive acts of beneficence, than can be traced to all the pulpits and confessionals in Christendom since 1842." Douglas Jerrold, by whom John Leech was recommended as the illustrator of the "Carol", wrote a most appreciative notice in "Punch", and Henry Chorley rendered a like service in "The Athenæum". It was the former review which led Dickens to write from Cremona to Jerrold that "it was very hearty and good of you, Jerrold, to make that affectionate mention of the 'Carol' in 'Punch', and I assure you it was not lost on the distant object of your manly regard, but touched him as you wished and meant it should". The best tribute, however, came from Thackeray, who, while in Switzerland, had received a box of novels. These he reviewed in "Fraser's Magazine". "And now there is but one book left in the box", he wrote, "the smallest one, but oh! how much the best of all." His tribute to the story fairly pulsates with enthusiasm. One can imagine dear old Thackeray, his face beaming with smiles and his eyes twinkling behind his spectacles, as he wrote:

> In fact, one might as well detail the plot of "The Merry Wives of Windsor" or "Robinson Crusoe", as recapitulate here the adventures of Scrooge, the miser, and his Christmas conversion. I am not sure that the allegory is a very complete one, and protest, with the classics, against the use of blank verse in prose; but here all objections stop. Who can listen to objections regarding such a book as this? It seems to me a national benefit, and to every man or woman who reads it, a personal kindness.

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The last two people I heard speak of it were women; neither knew the other, or the author, and both said, by way of criticism, "God bless him!" A Scotch philosopher, who nationally does not keep Christmas, on reading the book, sent out for a turkey, and asked two friends to dine—this is a fact! Many men were known to sit down after perusing it, and write off letters to their friends, not about business, but out of their fulness of heart, and to wish old acquaintances a happy Christmas. Had the book appeared a fortnight earlier, all the prize cattle would have been gobbled up in pure love and friendship, Epping denuded of sausages, and not a turkey left in Norfolk. His royal highness's fat stock would have fetched unheard of prices, and Alderman Bannister would have been tired of slaying. But there is a Christmas for 1844, too; the book will be as early then as now, and so let the spectators look out.

As for Tiny Tim, there is a certain passage in the book regarding that young gentleman, about which a man should hardly venture to speak in print or in public, any more than he would of any other affections of his private heart. There is not a reader in England but that little creature will be a bond of union between the author and him; and he will say of Charles Dickens, as the women just now, "GOD BLESS HIM!" What a feeling is this for a writer to be able to inspire and what a reward to reap!

There was, however, a fly in the ointment. The expense of publishing the book proved to be out of all proportion to the revenue. "Want of judgment had been shown in not adjusting the expenses of production to the selling price", is the explanation offered by Mr. Forster, Dickens's biographer. In a volume dealing with the first editions of Dickens's books, written by John C. Eckel, and published by Chapman and Hall in 1913, there is more detail. Mr. Eckel writes:

Knowing that he had written something of extraordinary merit, Dickens began to plan a suitable presentation of his effort. For the first time, and, incidentally, the last, he went in for colour, not only for the title-page, but also for the important etchings. The result was an artistic success, but a financial disappointment to the author. The greatest Christmas book ever written in any language delighted many thousands of readers but contributed to the unhappiness of the man who wrote it. The cost of the production had been too extravagant for a five-shilling book.

The first edition of six thousand was speedily sold and the second and third editions soon followed. In February, 1844, Dickens received his first statement from his publishers, and his share of the receipts seemed to be pitifully small. He wrote to Forster:

Such a night as I have passed. I really believed I should never get up again until I had passed through all the horrors of a fever. I found the "Carol" accounts awaiting me and they were the cause of it. The first six thousand copies show a profit of £230. And the last four will yield as much more. I had set my soul upon a thousand clear. What a wonderful thing it is that such a great success should occasion me such intolerable anxiety and disappointment.

Even though fifteen thousand copies had been sold by the end of 1844, netting Dickens a profit of £726, the shock of the meagre return had much to do with the severance of the relations between Dickens and his publishers. Eventually a reconciliation occurred but, in the meantime, several editions of the "Carol" bear the imprint of Bradbury and Evans. This was the firm to whom Dickens turned when he squabbled with his first publishers, and he remained with his new associates until 1859. Then he had a dispute with them and the connection ceased. Ley says in "The Dickens Circle":

In the years between 1844 and 1858 there was considerable friendliness with both Bradbury and Evans. They were familiar guests at the Devonshire House; and with Evans, at any rate, there could not have been an absolute rupture of the friendship, for the novelist's eldest son had fallen in love with the publisher's daughter, and in November, 1861, Charles Dickens, the younger, was married to Miss Evans.

As originally published, the "Carol" was bound in brown cloth, with gilt edges, and with the title stamped in type of quaint, old-fashioned design, also gilded. A gilded wreath of holly leaves added to the ornamentation. Altogether, twenty-four editions were issued in the original form, the only

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change being the substitution of crimson for brown cloth in the binding. The title-page in colors led to results which have been of great interest to book collectors. The very first issues were printed in red and blue and the heading of the first chapter appeared as "Stave 1". The book had not been on the press very long, however, before "Stave 1" was changed to "Stave One"; and Dickens experimented with red and green instead of red and blue, although later, there was a return to the latter colors. It is difficult to understand why red and blue were chosen for they make the title-page look like a Fourth of July poster, while red and green are the commonly accepted Christmas colors. Another variant was in the use of end papers, green being used in some books and cream color in others. There has, consequently, been considerable confusion regarding the identity of the several editions, but "among experts", says Eckels, "it is agreed that the real first issue is the red and blue title-page and the green end papers, with the error mentioned". The green and red issue with the green end papers and "'Stave 1" instead of "Stave One" is by far the most costly at the present day, because of its great scarcity. A copy of this issue was sold by a London book firm in 1912 for £32.

There are quite a number of copies of the first edition in the United States. At an exhibition held in St. Louis, in February, 1912, under the auspices of the Franklin Club, two were shown. One, from the collection of William K. Bixby, contains an inscription, "Mrs. Henry Austin, from Charles Dickens, Devonshire Terrace, Friday, December 22, 1843". Another copy was loaned by Frederick W. Lehmann, a distinguished lawyer of St. Louis. Still another copy was included in the Hoe Library (sold by Anderson in April, 1911), but it was sold to a London dealer. In the same year, another copy, belonging to the library of A. S. Whiton, of New York, was sold by Freeman and brought $46.00. This copy bore the bookplate of Reverend George Richard Mackarness, M.A. The average price of the first issues of the first edition in red and blue is $50.00. It is quite difficult, except in the case of presentation copies, to obtain perfect volumes. Mr. Eckel explains:

> "The Christmas Carol" achieved wonderful popularity at once and each little volume was eagerly read and reread many times. Crisp and unsoiled copies in the original state, as a consequence, are rather difficult of acquirement. The binding was rather frail, and the leaves became shaky and somewhat loose. These conditions forced rebinding and that explains the presence of many such copies on the market. Another habit prevailed for many years of rebinding uniformly all the Christmas books, and this again was fatal to numberless "Carols".

The Library of Congress does not contain a first edition. The earliest copy in that collection is of the tenth edition, published in 1844, bound in crimson cloth, with gilt letters, and illustrated with the colored plates drawn by Leech. The most precious copy is the one which Dickens sent to Thackeray with this autograph inscription: "W. M. Thackeray from Charles Dickens (whom he made very happy once a long way from home)." Mr. Ley says that he has been unable to trace the meaning of this allusion but adds that this copy of the "Carol" has an interesting history, for, when, after Thackeray's death, his belongings were sold by auction, Queen Victoria sent an unlimited commission to buy it, becoming its possessor for £25. 10s.

We have the authority of Charles

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Dickens, the younger, for the statement that the "Carol" shares with "Pickwick" and "David Copperfield" the distinction of being the most universally popular of all the works of Charles Dickens. The assertion is demonstrated by the great number of reprints. The book was issued steadily by Chapman and Hall, and Bradbury and Evans, the demand being met by cheap editions at a shilling and ninepence each. The old stereotyped plates were used by Chapman and Hall in 1873 for an edition on post-octavo paper, each page surrounded with red rule to fill the larger sheet. In the Library of Congress there are thirty-eight distinct reprints and it is conceded that the collection is incomplete. The story has been translated into French, German, Danish and other languages; it has been embossed for use of the blind; it has been transcribed in many systems of stenography; and (a travesty indeed) it has been rewritten by someone who thought it was unintelligible for children. Elbert Hubbard has preserved it in a high example of the typographical art. It is found in numberless collections of the best stories in English literature and it has attracted many artists, including Maclise, Landseer, Frederick Barnard and F. O. C. Darley. None of the reprints has the distinct charm and value which attaches to the volume in which the original manuscript is reproduced. The priceless sheets of Dickens's handiwork were given by him to Mr. Mitten, his old schoolfellow and solicitor. In some way they drifted into Sotheby's auction rooms in 1875, when they were purchased by a bookseller for £55, being afterward resold to Sir Stuart M. Samuel. In 1890 they were reproduced in facsimile with an introduction by F. G. Kitton, and five-hundred copies of the publication were imported into this country by Brentano. These were speedily sold and went into the libraries of collectors. The writing shows every evidence of rapid work, although there are comparatively few erasures or corrections.

The popularity of the "Carol" was, in one way, a source of great annoyance to the author. It was pirated in many directions. In one case of peculiar flagrancy he accepted the advice of Thomas Noon Talfourd and John Forster and began an action in the Court of Chancery. The case was successful, except that Dickens was unable to get any costs out of the defendant, but it gave him much vexation. "I shall not easily forget the expense and anxiety, and horrible injustice of the 'Carol' case", he wrote afterward, when there was a question whether he ought not to institute proceedings in another case, "wherein, in asserting the plainest right on earth, I was really treated as if I were the robber instead of the robbed. . . . And I know of nothing that could come, even of a successful action, which would be worth the mental trouble and disturbance it would cost." At the same time, his sense of humor did not desert him. The case was so flagrant that the Vice Chancellor would not even listen to the argument which Talfourd had carefully prepared. Dickens's sympathy was mingled with amusement. "Oh, the agony of Talfourd at Knight Bruce's not hearing him," he wrote to Forster. "He had sat up 'till three in the morning, he says, preparing his speech, and would have done all kind of things with the affidavits!" Even as late as 1869, says Charles Dickens, the younger, one of these imitations was published under the title, "Christ-

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mas Eve with the Spirits, or The Canon's Wanderings through Ways Unknown".

Another curious phase of the "Carol" is illustrated by the many attempts which have been made to dramatize it. The story in dialogue for acting is to be found in every library but these efforts may be dismissed with brief comment. They are sad failures, a fact not difficult to understand. The atmosphere of the book is in the sentences and paragraphs which cannot be transplanted to the stage. It is no wonder that Dickens was not favorably impressed when he witnessed the presentation at the Savoy and the Adelphi. He characterized the impersonation of Bob Cratchit as "heartbreaking", and exclaimed in a letter, "Oh, Heaven! If any forecast of this was ever in my mind . . ." And this brings us to the consideration of what was in Dickens's mind when he created his characters in the "Carol". Did he picture real people or did he merely imagine them? The question cannot be answered satisfactorily because all efforts to find human prototypes in actual existence have proven a failure. "Who's Who in Dickens" throws no light upon the subject, nor is there information in the large and interesting volume dealing with the originals of Dickens's characters. In none of these works is there any indication that the "squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner" known as Scrooge had an actual counterpart among the persons whom Dickens met in daily life. The same is true regarding all the other characters in the story.

Another interesting fact connected with "A Christmas Carol" is that Dickens used it as the medium for the first of the platform readings which afterward became so famous. When the Midland Institute was established in Birmingham in 1853, a benefit performance was given and Dickens was invited to participate. As the date was December 27, the "Carol" was the most appropriate feature, and his reading of the story marked the debut of his platform appearance. It is easy to imagine that the cordial appreciation which followed the infusion of his own personality into the characters of the "Carol" opened for him a vista of possibilities which he could not afford to ignore. He always placed the "Carol" on his program *con amore*, and one occasion inspired a delightful letter to Mary Boyle. "I have just been reading my 'Christmas Carol' in Yorkshire", he wrote to her. "I should have lost my heart to the beautiful young lady of the hotel (age twenty-nine, dress, black frock and jacket, exquisitely braided), if it had not been safe in your possession." At the same time he enclosed a kiss to Mary, "if you will have the kindness to return it when done with".

It is not necessary to review the "Carol" itself; I am content to accept Mr. Ley's judgment that it is Dickens's "noblest work", and to read with appreciation the commendations of Thackeray, Lord Jeffrey, Sidney Smith, Thomas Hood, Austin Dobson, Andrew Lang, G. K. Chesterton, E. P. Whipple, and a score of other eminent commentators who place the "Carol" upon the highest pinnacle of literary achievement. It has been a pleasure to me to search every nook and cranny for the stray facts which, when woven together, tell this story of a Christmas story. Some of these days, God willing, I will fill a shelf with every known edition of the "Carol", from the cheap, ten-cent "English classic" to the costly issue on vellum; but still in the place

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of honor will be the well-worn volume which has been my constant companion for so many years. In the meantime, I hope that what I have written may lead the readers of THE BOOKMAN to take up the "Carol" with a new delight. If, in the reading, one does not, like Dickens, weep and laugh and weep again, he cannot hope to know what Christmas really means, and can only regret that he is the sad possessor of an ossified heart.

FAME

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YOU have a story. We want to read it. Every human life has one great story in it. Every man, every woman, has at least one story to tell.

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BENJAMIN KEYES drew a long breath: "This means you"—there was no doubt about that. These printed words had read his heart. He felt that deep was answering unto deep.

A brief résumé of his life passed through Keyes's mind. And he was touched, as never before, by the romance of destiny. He had not contrived to be called up to public charges or employments of dignity or power in the world. When Ol' Necessity had tapped him on the shoulder he had cut his scholastic pursuits short of college, and a family friend, Dr. Nevens, had got him a fifth-rate job in a third-rate business concern. Here it seemed extremely probable that he would spend a good many of his days. By the continued exercise of steadiness of character, diligence, and application, he might hope, as Dr. Nevens by way of encouragement occasionally pointed out, to advance at the rate of a couple of dollars or so every couple of years. Clerkdom hedged him about as divinity doth a king.

The city directory rated him, "B. C. Keyes, Clerk". Should he be killed in a railway accident, chosen as a juror, or arrested for homicide, the newspapers would report that B. C. Keyes, a clerk, of 1120 Meredith Street,—etc. There was, he felt when he looked at it fairly, no way out. In the "Americans of Today" magazine articles, men rise from bootblacks to multimillionaires, but these legends, Keyes felt numbly, had about as much relation to his own life as the hero tales of ancient Greece. His lot was cast in the bottom of a well.

And yet,—Keyes had been considered a bright youngster at school; he regarded himself as a rather bright young man now; and sometimes even yet, in wayward, impractical moments,

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he saw in his mind a picture of himself breaking away from the field (so to say) and coming rounding into the home stretch to bear down on a grandstand wild with applause. He bore about within him a subconscious premonition, as it were, which apparently would not die, that something remarkable was to happen to him sooner or later. An unpleasant circumstance was that it was getting later now all the time. Still the estimate of his worth returned to him by life, did not rid him of the belief that he had been originally intended by his Maker for higher things than he had found.

When, occasionally, the gloomy contrast of his life as it was, with his career as he conceived it had been meant to be, depressed him too untowardly, a young lady whom Keyes called Louise would administer spiritual stimulants.

Louise was a very clever person, and she knew a superior young man when she saw one. She did not care for your common men at all. She was intellectual. She read everything, her friends said. She often told Keyes that he ought to write. She knew, she declared, that he could write better than most of the people who did write.

This idea of writing had, now and then, occurred to Keyes himself. He was rather fond, in his odd hours, of reading periodical fiction, which he liked to discuss with serious people like Louise. Sometimes with the exhilaration occasioned by the reading of a particularly good story, a romantic impulse to express himself welled up in him, and then evaporated. Generally in these instances he wanted to write a kind of story he had just read. He felt the glamour of the life of adventurous tales. He thrilled in response to the note struck in that sort of romance best exemplified, perhaps, in one of his favorites, "The Man Who Would Be King". Or he longed to be like O. Henry, wise with the wisdom of the Town. But there was one sort of story which always ignited in his mind the thought that he really did know a story of his own. This he sometimes positively yearned to tell. This the advertisement had put its finger upon. "Every human life has one great story in it." It was even so. "From your own heart history . . ."—Benjamin Keyes felt that emotion which is the conception of a work of art.

He was pregnant with his idea. He rose from his bed betimes. He breathed a strangely fragrant air. He looked at the beautiful world. He wrote. He mentioned his little employment to no one: he felt rather ashamed of it, in fact; but it infatuated him. He encountered some awful tough spots, and at times he almost despaired—but he could not give up. Something within him, which he himself was conscious he did not understand, tortured him to go on. All day long, while at his business, his meals, his shaving, his story turned and twisted and talked in the back of his head. Despair alternated with exultation. At hours there came a gusto to his work; words that he had heard or read, forgotten and never used, came back to him from heaven knows where, and sprang to his pen at the felicitous instance. He felt that his mind was more alert than he remembered it to have ever been; he felt that his eyes were brighter; his hands, his whole right arm, felt strong. He knew as he worked that this was character, and this was sentiment, and this was humor. He was shaken by the respiration of a heady drama. He felt that this—was almost genius! And he was

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aghast that he had lived such a dull life hitherto when this capacity had been in him.

He possessed little theoretic knowledge of writing; his story grew naturally, like a tree: he was intelligent, and he had a story to tell which must be told. In the matter of technical construction he followed in a general way, intuitively, unconsciously for the most part, without elaborate examination, the form of a short story as he was acquainted with it through his reading of stories. He wandered alone at night, oblivious of anything else, thinking, thinking his story over; and he felt good in his brain and in his heart and in his stomach. He felt virile, elated, full of power, and strangely happy. The joy of creating a thing of art was upon him. Thrills ran down his spine and into his legs; he would grin to himself in the dark streets; and sometimes he laughed aloud. Everything else he neglected. He could not even read the newspapers; he stayed at home two days from business; he worked early and late, and walked up and down, throbbing, meantimes.

The story was almost finished. The story *was finished.* What would Louise say? Would she think that he ought not to have written, ought not to make public, so intimate a history? Then in the story he had carried things further than they were in fact: the artistic instinct had formally plighted the lover's troth. He thought of submitting his manuscript without showing it to Louise. Would it not be fine for her to discover the story in print! But Keyes had to read that story to someone or blow up.

His evening with Louise began awkwardly. The pleasant interchange of being did not, as usually so happily it did with Louise, flow naturally along. Keyes was accustomed to feel that with Louise he talked better than before anyone else. He now and then wished that certain other people, upon whom he felt he had not made so favorable an impression as he deserved, could overhear him sometime with Louise. Now, curiously, with her he felt as he had with them: he could not somehow get his real machinery started. Three or four times he determined to embark upon the subject in his mind, and as many times the rising fulness in his chest and the sudden quivering of his heart daunted him. As he looked now at Louise, sitting there before him, the dignity of her as a young woman struck him, and it occurred to him as extraordinary that he could have been so intimate with her. He about concluded to put off his story until another time, at which immediately he felt much relieved.

His gaze wandered about among the familiar objects of the little parlor—the ordinary articles of the family furniture, the photographs on the mantel, the hand-painted plate on the wall,—then rested upon the framed Maxfield Parrish, which Keyes knew, with a glow of pride, to express the superior refinement of Louise's own taste. Keyes shared Louise's interest in art; he knew, and very much admired, the work of Dulac, James Montgomery Flagg, N. C. Wyeth, Arthur Keller, and many others; this was one of the fascinating bonds which united them, in division from a frivolous, material, and unsympathetic world. He glanced again now at the sumptuous Rackham book on the table, which it had been such a delight to him to give her at Christmas; and the revived discussion of æsthetics led him fairly comfortably into the subject of his own entrance into work in that

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field. His manuscript came out of his pocket; and, straightening up on the edge of his chair, a little nervous again in the still pause that ensued, he cleared his throat, and, in a rather diffident voice, began to read. As he proceeded and knew that his efforts found favor, his want of confidence left him. He fell into the swing and color of his work; and the heart of it he tasted like fine wine as he read. In the more moving passages his voice shook a trifle, and tears very nearly came into his eyes; it was all, he felt, so beautiful. When he had concluded there was in Louise's eyes—as he looked up, and saw her sitting, leaned forward her chin on the back of her hand, her elbow on her knee,—a strange light. It occurred to Keyes that he did not remember ever to have seen a woman's face look exactly that way before. Probably not. This was a light some men never find on land or sea. It does not shine for any man more than once or twice. They sat awhile, these two in the little parlor, and happiness roared through their veins. Louise told Keyes that she had always known that he "had it in him". Then they arose, and they were near to each other, and their hearts were filled, and beneath the chandelier, he moved his arms about her. His lips clasped hers. It was thus as it was in the story.

Keyes emerged from the brightly lighted doorway with Louise beaming tenderly after him. In his blissful abstraction of mind he neglected, on the dark porchway, to turn the corner of the house to the steps; but walked instead, straight ahead, until the world gave way beneath him, and he collapsed with a crash among the young vines.

The next week Louise, who held a position in the "Nickel's Weekly" Circulation Branch office in the Middle West, neatly typed the manuscript on one of the firm's machines. One evening they went together to post the story. . . . The ancient, imperturbable moon observed this momentous deed.

When Keyes put that manuscript into the mail box, he *knew* that it would be accepted. He felt this in his bones. He felt it in the soles of his feet and in the hair on his head.

For several days succeeding, a sensuous complacency pervaded young Keyes. In a rich haze he saw himself acclaimed, famous, adored. His nature was ardent, and he had always craved the warmth of approbation; but he had not had it, except from Louise. Now there were moments when, in a picture in his mind, he saw an attractive figure, which he recognized as himself somewhat altered, come jauntily along, amiably smiling, swinging a cane. He had always secretly desired very much to carry a cane, but he had felt uncomfortably that the humbleness of his position in life would make this ridiculous. In his moments of ambition he had hoped, sometimes, that walking-sticks would not go out (to put it so) before he came in. In the background of his mental picture, Keyes recognized, among the doting multitude, the faces of about all of his acquaintances, some brought for the occasion from rather remote places.

Keyes felt a slight wrench of conscience in winking at this poetic liberty taken with realistic probability. When a name occurred to him the physiognomy of whose person was absent, Keyes's sense of probity was smothered, with a slight twinge of pain, by the ardor of his imagination; and place in the press was found for this person, very kindly well up in

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front, where a good view could be had by him of the celebrity—at this point the celebrity in the delectable vision was observed gaily to light a cigarette. Discernible in the throng, too, were some few whose mean and envious natures writhed, the psychologist in Keyes perceived, at this handsome recognition of the worth of a young man it had once been their wont to snub.

In this balmy temper of mind, Keyes got down to business one morning a little late. The humdrum of a business life had begun to be somewhat more irksome than hitherto to Keyes's swelling spirit. He ruminated this morning, as he stood before his tall stool at his ledger, on the curious ill-adjustment of a universe so arranged that one of his capacity for finer things could remain so unsuspected of the world about him, and the rich value of his life to some unmeaning task-work be allowed to give. A sudden electric buzzing beneath his high desk signaled him that his presence was desired by his chief. "What now?" he thought, a little tremulously and a little irritably, as he went: he had been caught up on several slips lately. He paused respectfully in the private office doorway. Mr. Winder, from his swivel-chair, flashed up his white moustache very straight at Keyes. "Sit down," he directed. The suavity which was his habit was quite absent. Keyes felt the presence in the air of a good deal of masculine firmness. "This", said Mr. Winder, his eyes steadily on Keys, "is a place of business. It is not a gentleman's club. Now, I want you to take a brace. That will do." As Keyes took up his pen again and began to write, "By merchandise", his breast was full with resentment: a sense of the real integrity of his nature welled up in him. His mind rapidly generated the divers manly replies he wished, with an intensity amounting to pain, he had thought of a moment before. He saw himself, now exasperatingly too late, saying with frank honesty to Mr. Winder:

"I realize that I have of late been a little delinquent. But (with some eloquence) it has always been my intention to be, and I believe in the main I have been, a faithful and conscientious employee. I shall not be found wanting again."

But here he was a rebuked culprit. He felt the degradation of servitude. He experienced sharply that violent yearning so familiar to all that are employed everywhere, to be able to go in and tell Mr. Winder to go to the devil. And though he felt at bottom the legitimacy, in the business ethic, of Mr. Winder's attitude, he also felt forlornly the coldness of the business relation, the brutal authority of worldly power, and its conception of his insignificance. And he was stung at the moral criminality, as he felt it to be, of a situation which placed such a man as Mr. Winder over such a nature as his own; Mr. Winder he did not suppose had read a book within the last ten years.

As, at that hour which sets the weary toiler free, in the gathering dusk Keyes stood on the curb amid the hurrying throng homeward bound,—oh! how he longed for that establishment in the eyes of men which the success of his story would bring him. Oh, when would he hear! As he bowled along in the crowded trolley the thought stole through him, until it amounted almost to a conviction, that the great letter awaited him at home now. He could hardly bear the tedium of the short journey. Restlessly he turned his evening paper.

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In him had developed of late a great interest in authors; he peered between the pages, a little sheepishly, at the column, "Books and Their Makers". He read that Mr. So and So, the author of "This and That", was a young man thirty years of age. Instantly he reflected that he himself was but twenty-seven. This was encouraging! He had formed a habit recently of contrasting at once any writer's age with his own. If he learned that Mr. Galsworthy, whose books were much advertised but which he had not read, was forty-something, he wanted to know how old he had been when he wrote his first book. Then he counted up the number of books between that time —comparing his age at that time with his own—and now. He was absorbed in the literary gossip of the day. That Myra Kelly had been a schoolteacher, that Gertrude Atherton lived in California, that Mr. Bennett had turned thirty before he published his first book, that such a writer was in Rome, or that some other one was engaged on a new work said to be about the Russian Jews,—he found very interesting. He read in his newspaper the publishers' declaration that Maurice Hewlett's new creation recalled Don Quixote, Cyrano, d'Artagnan, Falstaff, Bombastes Furioso, Tartarin, Gil Blas. His notions concerning the characters of this company were somewhat vague; but he was stirred with an ambition to create some such character, too.

On leaving the car whom should he see but Dr. Nevens. They walked along together. Dr. Nevens inquired about the business. A bad year, he surmised, for trade. Trade! Keyes felt his heart thumping with the temptation to confide the adventures of his literary life; which, indeed, he had found exceedingly difficult to keep so much to himself. But his position gave him clairvoyance: he divined that no sort of ambition receives from people in general so little respect, by some curious idiosyncrasy of the human mind, as literary aspiration. With what coarse and withering scorn had an intimation—which had escaped him—that he had sought to give some artistic articulation to his ideas, been met by Pimpkins the other day at the office! The personality of Dr. Nevens, however, suggested a more sympathetic attitude, by reason of the dentist's cultivation. Dr. Nevens was spoken of as a "booklover". He had a "library"—it was, he implied, his bachelor foible—the cornerstone of which was a set of the Thistle edition of Stevenson that he had bought by subscription from an agent. (Keyes had thought it odd one day that Dr. Nevens had not cut the leaves.) And "the doctor" was fond of speaking familiarly of Dickens, and gained much admiration by his often saying that he should like—had he time—to read through "Esmond" once every year. Here, Keyes felt, would be spiritual succor.

But Keyes quickly learned that he was quite in a different case from the author of "Esmond". Dr. Nevens was kind, but pitying.

"Only one out of hundreds, thousands", he said, "ever comes to anything."

It did not occur to him, Keyes thought, as within the range of remotest possibility that he, Keyes, *might* be one of these. Then came the doctor's reason.

"You do not know anything", he said paternally, "anything at all."

Keyes realized, with some bitterness, that this world is not an institution existing for the purpose of detecting and rewarding inner worth

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He had known enough to write his story, he guessed. With some flare of rage, he felt that simply unsupported merit is rather frowned upon, as tending by comparison to cast others possibly not possessing so much of it somewhat into the shade. He had a savage thought that when he was Dr. Nevens's age he would not be a country dentist. He saw the intense egoism of mankind.

Dr. Nevens was determined to show a young man who had betrayed a consciousness of superiority of grain, his place—economically and socially. The selfish jealousy of the world!

* * * *

His letter had not come. There was only a package from Louise—a copy of "Book Talk", containing a marked article on "Representative American Story Tellers"; from this, after dinner, Keyes imbibed most of the purported facts about Booth Tarkington. Then he went to bed to sleep through the hours until the return of the postman.

The next evening still there was no letter. Keyes's spirit was troubled. He sought the solace of solitude in the quiet, shadowed streets. A reaction was succeeding his rosy complacency! Doubts pierced his dissolving confidences. Was his story so good, after all? Somehow, as he looked back at it now, it seemed much less strong than it had before. He felt a sort of sinking in his stomach. A sickening suspicion came to him that, perhaps, it was absurd. Maybe it was very silly. In a disconnected way certain remarks and passages in it came back to him now as quite questionable. Yes, they sounded pretty maudlin. He squirmed within with mortification as a recollection of these passages passed through his mind. He hoped his story would never get into print. A fear that it might nauseated him. Then he was suffused with a sensation of how little he amounted to. He felt, with a sense of great weakness, the precariousness of his job. A horror came over him that he might lose it. He wished he did not know Louise, who expected things of him. He felt how awkward it was so to fail her. In the position he had got himself into with her, how he had laid himself open to humiliating exposure! Oh, why had he ever sought her? He wished he did not know anybody well. He was an ass and he would never come to anything. He felt the futility of his life. Why could he not slink away somewhere and live out his feeble existence unobserved? As he got into bed he felt that very easily he could cry.

* * *

The August
FAVORITE MAGAZINE
This number contains
The Great Prize Story
by
BENJAMIN CECIL KEYES
G E T I T ! !

. . . Keyes stood before a down-town news-stand. Hurrying pedestrians bumped into him. An irascible character or two, thus impeded, glared back at him—what was the matter with the fellow! Did he think there was nobody but himself in the world?

B. C. Keyes walked home to the sound of a great orchestra reverberating through him. He could not tolerate the thought of subduing himself to the confinement of a car. He needed movement and air.

It had come, his great letter, a few weeks before. At his sitting down to dinner his mother had given him the

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envelope. "The Favorite Magazine"—these words had seemed to him to be printed in the upper left-hand corner; it had struck him that perhaps the strain on his nerves of late had so deranged his mind that he now saw, as in a mirage, what was not. "Benjamin C. Keyes, Esq."—so ran the address. Keyes in his dizziness noted this point: people had not customarily addressed him as *esquire*. Then, for the first time in his life, he held in his hand a substantial check payable to his own name—wealth! Courteous and laudatory typewritten words danced before his burning eyes.

He felt, though in a degree an hundred times intensified, as though he had smoked so much tobacco, and drunk so much coffee, he could not compose himself to eat, or read a paper, or go to bed, or stay where he was; but must rush off somewhere else and talk hysterically. He got through his meal blindly. He could not explain—just yet—to his mother: he felt he could not control the patience necessary to begin at the beginning and construct a coherent narrative. . . . He must go to Louise who already understood the preliminary situation.

It had occurred to Keyes on his hurried, stumbling way thither that the whole thing was unbelievable, and that he must be quite insane. After he had pushed the bell, an interminable time seemed to elapse before his ring was answered. As he stood there on the porch he felt his flesh palpitating. A terrible fear came over him that Louise might not be at home. . . . Louise said, when her frenzy had somewhat abated, that she had always known that he "had it in him". She told him there was now "a future" before him. . . . Keyes had determined to go on about his business as though nothing unusual had occurred; then when the story appeared, to accept congratulations with retiring modesty. Before noon the next day he had told three people; by night, seven.

So, going over it all again, Keyes arrived at home, to learn that—"What do you think?" His mother said "a reporter" had been at the house; an occurrence—quite unprecedented in Mrs. Keyes's experience—which had thrown her into considerable agitation. This public official she had associated in her confusion with a policeman. He had, however, treated her as a personage of great interest. He told her "there was nothing to be ashamed of". He drew from her trembling lips some account of her son's life, and requested a photograph.

Next day the dean of local newspapers, vigilant in patriotism, printed an extended article on the "state's new writer". Keyes received an ovation at "the office". The humility of Pimpkins's admiration was abject. Keyes perceived the commanding quality of ambition—when successful. Miss Wimble, the hollow-breasted cashieress, regarded him with sheep's-eyes. Even Mr. Winder, in passing, congratulated him upon his "stroke of luck".

Wonders once begun, it seemed, poured. Two letters awaited him that evening. One from the editor of "The Monocle Magazine". "The *Monocle* Magazine!" as Louise said, "think of it!" The editor of this distinguished institution spoke of his "pleasure" in reading Mr. Keyes's "compelling" story; he begged to request the favor of the "offer" of some of Keyes's "other work". By way of a fraternal insinuation he mentioned that he was a native of Andiena, himself. "Most of us are", was his sportive comment.

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The "Consolidated Sunday Magazines, Inc." wrote with much business directness to solicit "manuscript", at "immediate payment on acceptance at your regular rates for fiction of the first class".

The extraordinary turn of events in Keyes's life brought him visitors as well as letters. Dr. Nevens called, benignly smiling appreciation. His impression appeared to be that he had not been mistaken in giving Keyes his support. Of more constructive importance, however, was the turning up of Mr. Tate, who had been Keyes's instructor in "English" at the Longridge High School. A slender, pale, young man, with a bald, domed forehead "rising in its white mass like a tower of mind", Mr. Tate was understood to nourish a deep respect for literature. He had contributed one or two very serious and painstaking "papers" on the English of Chaucer (not very well understood by Keyes at the time), to "Poet-Lore"; and had edited, with notes, several "texts"—one of "The Lady of the Lake", with an "introduction", for school use. He reverenced, he now made evident, the "creative gift", as he designated it; which, he realized, had been denied him. He had come to pay homage to a vessel of this gift, his former pupil, now illustrious.

With the hand of destiny Mr. Tate touched a vital chord. Self-assertion; to be no longer an unregarded atom in the mass of those born only to labor for others; to find play for the mind and the passion which, by no choice of his own, distinguished him from the time slave: this was now Keyes's smouldering thought. Mr. Tate, from his conversancy with the literary situation, reported that there never was in the history of the world such a demand for fiction as now, and that "the publishers" declared there was not an overproduction of good fiction. Editors, Mr. Tate said, were eager to welcome new talent. He strongly encouraged Keyes to adopt what he spoke of as the "literary life". In fact, he seemed to consider that there was no alternative. And, indeed, already in Keyes's own idea of his future he saw himself eventually settled somewhere amid the Irvin-Cobbs, the Julian-Streets, the Joseph-Hergesheimers, and other clever people whose society would be congenial to him.

For the present he cultivated his ego, as became a literary light; and now, with Mr. Tate's assistance, he began to devote the time at his command to preparation for his life's work, to study. Mr. Tate was ardent to be of service; he felt that he had here connected himself with literary history in the making. The great need for Keyes, he felt, was education. The creative genius, Mr. Tate said, could not be implanted; but he felt that this other he could supply. He recommended that patient study of men and books. He thought that what Keyes needed in especial was "technical" knowledge; so he went at that strong. Maupassant, Mr. Tate said, was the great master of the short story. Keyes began his evening studies in English translations of Maupassant.

The galling yoke of his business life was becoming well-nigh unbearable. His soul was in ferment. If only he did not have to get up to hurry every morning down to that penitentiary, there to waste his days, he could get something done. That sapped his vitals. And he was tortured by a flame—to do, to read, study, create, grow, accomplish! He was expanding against the walls of his environment. God! could he but burst them asunder, and leap out!

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Mr. Tate had a high idea of a thing which he spoke of as "style". In elucidation of this theme he suggested perusal of essays and treatises by DeQuincey, Walter Pater, and Professor Raleigh. He felt also that the "art of fiction" should be mastered by his protégé. So Keyes pitched into examinations of this recondite subject by Sir Walter Besant, Marion Crawford, R. L. Stevenson, and Anthony Trollope. Keyes realized that he had *not* realized before what a lot there was *to* writing. Mr. Tate purchased out of his slender means as a present, "Success in Literature", by G. H. Lewis. He unearthed a rich collection in titles of books the consumption of which literature would be invaluable to one in training for the literary profession. An admirable bibliography, this list, of the genre which was Keyes's specialty:—"The Art of Short Story Writing", "Practical Short Story Writing", "The Art of the Short Story", "The Short Story", "Book of the Short Story", "How to Write a Short Story", "Writing of the Short Story", "Short Story Writing", "Philosophy of the Short Story", "The Story-Teller's Art", "The Short Story in English", "Selections from the World's Greatest Short Stories", "American Short Stories", "Great English Short-Story Writers". In the reading room of the public library Keyes followed a series of articles in "Book Talk" on the "Craftsmanship of Writing". He advanced in literary culture, under Mr. Tate's zealous lead, to consideration of "the novel", *its* history and development. And, too, to the drama, its law and technique. His head was filled with the theory of dénouements, "moments", rising actions, climaxes, suspended actions, and catastrophes. At times he had an uneasy feeling that all these things did not much help him to think up any new stories of his own. But Mr. Tate said "that" would "come".

And wealth and fame were even now at hand. The promoters of the great prize contest advertising dodge had not been at fault in business acumen; the winning story returned ample evidence of its popular appeal. It was akin to the minds of the "peepul". "The Favorite Magazine" was sold during August by enterprising newsboys *on trolley cars*. That great public whose literature is exclusively contemporaneous, — whose world of letters is the current "Saturday Mail-Coach", the "All-people's Magazine", the "Purple Book", the "Nothing-But-Stories", the "Modiste", "The Swift Set", "Jones's, the Magazine that Entertains", "Brisk Stories", "Popularity", and the "Tip-Top",— discussed the big feature on front porches. Keyes's story even attracted the interest of those *who seldom read anything*. A number of letters from persons of that impulsive class which communicates its inward feelings to authors personally unknown, were forwarded to Keyes from his publishers. A young lady resident in St. Joe, Michigan, wrote to say that she thought the scene where the boat upsets was the "*grandest thing* ever written".

Imagine a man like Keyes sitting his days away on an office stool. His mother, however, could not "see" his resigning his position. His "father had always" . . . and so forth. Keyes foamed within. What a thing— woman's maddening narrowness! At the office Keyes's situation grew, in subtle ways, more and more oppressive. His position appeared to become equivocal. Mr. Winder seemed to make a point of increasing exactingness. Keyes felt a disposition in au-

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thority to put down any subordinate uppishness of feeling possibly occasioned by doings outside the line of business. And he became conscious, too, of a curious estrangement from his associates there. They, on their side, Pimpkins in especial, seemed to feel that he felt he was too good for them. And, in truth, he did. The mundane aims of those around him got on his nerves. Their commonplace thoughts irritated him. They were *common* natures. But, with fierce secret joy, Keyes knew that an event was approaching which promised, would command, deliverance from it all.

Fall came. And the Favorite Publishing Company bound up the prize story as a "gift book" for the holiday trade. Claud Clarence Chamberlain, the well-known illustrator and creator of the famous "Picture-Hat Girl", was commissioned to make the decorations. These were done with much dash in highly colored crayon and popular sentiment. One was printed on the paper jacket of the book, with the title in embossed letters. The advertisement pronounced the work altogether "an exquisite piece of bookmaking". It declared the production the "daintiest gift of the season", and reminded "people of culture and refinement" that there was "no present like a book".

Indeed a hero is not without fame in his own country. The Stanton-Merritt bookstore on Capital street arranged a window display of about a ton of "Will Rockwell Makes Good", with one of Mr. Chamberlain's original illustrations, framed, in the centre. A monster advertising banner was flung across the front of the store above the entrance and windows. Just inside, a pyramid breast-high was built of the books, beneath an artistic piece of work—a hanging board upon which was burned in old English letters: "'A good book is the precious life blood of a Master Spirit'—Milton". A lady who informed the salesman that she thought "books" were "just fine", bought twenty copies for holiday distribution. She inquired if there was not a discount on that number purchased.

Drugged with triumph, they returned together Saturday night from the exhibition "down town"; and, in the now historic little parlor again, Louise wept upon the shoulder of her affianced. Yes; they were formally engaged. Keyes was not without a sensation that the situation was rather chaotic. But destiny seemed to close in on him and bear him on.

The reviewers got on the job. And they were there with the goods. Statements from a few typical press notices follow. "An absorbing story", said the Topeka "Progressive", "throbbing with optimism." "Mr. Keyes strikes a new note in this unusual production; vivid, dramatic," — San Francisco "Lookout". "A story of vivid and compelling interest," one critic declared. "A delightful story, rich in heart throbs," was one good one. One reviewer said, "Here we have a real love story, a tale of love, tender and true, delightfully narrated. There are so many fine, tender passages in the episode of these two, who live just for each other, that reading the little book is like breathing strong, refreshing air." "The creator of 'Will Rockwell' ", said one paper, "has here written a new idyl of America." "An inspiring picture," said another. One very fine critique said: "Once in awhile, possibly once in a lifetime, there arises before us a writer of fiction whose genius is undeniable the instant it greets us". When Keyes

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read this, quoted in his publisher's latest newspaper advertisement, he knew that he had found his work in the world. And reasoning from his experience, he saw before him a calling that would be ever a noble intoxication of the soul, a kind that would know naught of headaches or remorse.

But perhaps the best of all the critical dicta was this: "Written", it declared, "with blood and tears and fire." Very impressive was the number of times that were used such adjectives as, "big", "vital", "absorbing", "compelling", "remarkable", "insistent", and "virile". "Optimism", it developed too, was the supreme merit of fiction. One of the arresting terms employed was "economy of means".

There were, it is true, a few dissenting voices from the chorus of unrestrained praise, chiefly from certain notoriously dull, conservative, killjoy journals. The New York "Evening Postman" said: "This somewhat amateurish little essay in fiction seems to be the product of an untutored sincerity. In this, its sincerity, it is not without a degree of vigor. We doubt, however, whether the author can repeat the performance". And that irrepressibly ribald organ, the New York "Beam", could not forbear its customary jocular sport. Its smart review of this little classic (as one bookseller already pronounced it) began: "Hooray for 'Will'! Hooray also for 'Mabel'! They are the real simegoozlia."

* * *

"Don't you think you could write something now, dear?" inquired Mrs. Keyes, who did not see how scholarship pure and simple was, so to say, to move the boat.

This idea of writing something now had indeed occurred to Keyes; but somehow he had not been able to think of anything in particular to write. So he went on with his studies, at the same time keeping an eye open for available material, characters, and plots.

"Surely you can write something, Ben, that we could get some money for", said Louise. A wife, after all, is only a woman, with a mind fitted to petty things, such as groceries, family washings, clothing, and divers household bills. It is irritating to a man of lofty mind who night and day is racking his brain for an idea, to be prodded on in this fashion. Keyes ground his teeth and bore it; he reflected that an author's life is frequently a battle with mediocrity. Perhaps he was mistaken as to where lay the mediocrity with which he battled.

He fretted and worried and at length sat himself down to write without an inspiration. He bethought himself of Trollope's example to literary aspirants, and tried to grind out two hundred and fifty words every fifteen minutes for three hours a day. He couldn't write twenty. He kept doggedly on. He could not make his characters act or talk—the talk was the most hopeless thing of all. He couldn't, as once he had done, cry over them. Sometimes, in the stillness of the night with his clock ticking before him, he almost thought that he had regained for a moment a tithe of the power he once had; but in the morning when he reviewed his work he admitted that he had been sadly mistaken. Now doubts haunted his soul; even as he wrote another consciousness within not thus employed whispered of his impotency. Fact is, Keyes had not at all the creative gift.

He struggled through a number of stories, some better and some worse.

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When he mailed these it was with a faltering, doubting heart. Something with a weak action away in his interior told him that they would not be accepted.

Keyes got thinner in flesh, more distressed in spirit, and poorer in this world's goods as time went on. Sometimes he felt like an imposter and was ashamed to face his wife; then he reread his press notices and a fever to do something shook him. But a man cannot support himself and his wife on a fever to do something. Benjamin Cecil Keyes could not understand the thing: if he had literary genius why couldn't he write? If he had not, how then had he written? To sit in full view of one's wife day after day pretending to be interested in a book when the bill-collector calls; and to be tormented all the time by a desire to do something and not to be able to do it, or know when, if ever, one will be able; and to be ashamed and afraid to tell one's wife this; but to be compelled to be there, or to run away, or to hang one's self; this is a situation more than uncomfortable.

A thousand times Keyes decided to roll up his sleeves and do something else—engage in any profitable employment; and a thousand times he decided not to—just yet. A man often exists in this way until he gets quite to the end of the string where the wolf is.

"That was an accident, Louise", said Keyes sadly one day. "I find I can't write."

Keyes was mistaken again. No fine thing ever was made by accident. Keyes managed to write that story because its theme was the most interesting incident in his life; because it appealed to him more strongly than anything else had in his whole experience; because he was thoroughly familiar with the life and the people he featured in his story; because he was absolutely sincere in his sympathies, appreciation, and emotions here; he had no ideals set way beyond his power, no aping tendencies after an effective style, no attention distracted by an ill-digested knowledge of mechanical construction. The structure, and the style simply came, probably because—and finally he managed to write that story because—he was keyed up to it.

A domestic woman often has a wretchedly unworshipful view of art and fame. Keyes's confession did not kill Louise. I suppose he expected her to go back to her parents in high dudgeon as one who had been grossly swindled.

"Do you care if you can't write?" she said, after a moment's silence. "Just think how nice you are—how much nicer you were before you tried to write! And how it has worried you!"

Keyes got a job as a collector for a mercantile house. "My health demands outdoor employment", he told his acquaintances.

* * *

Sometimes, alone with his lamp after the day's confounded drudgery, Keyes got out the old magazine and reread his forgotten story.

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CURRENTS IN FRENCH LITERATURE

BY MRS. BELLOC LOWNDES

IF Paul Deschanel becomes President of the French Republic, the Elysée is likely to become a literary centre. Not only is M. Deschanel an Immortel, but his wife was the granddaughter of Camille Doucet, the famous Secretary of the French Academy. Their marriage was one of the great social and literary events of the first year of the new century, and the witnesses of the marriage were a kind of epitome of the bride and bridegroom's past and future life, for they included a son of President Carnot, a nephew of Gambetta; Pierre Sardou—son of the dramatist; and Pierre Gounod—grandson of the composer.

II

While German statesmen, generals, and admirals, are pouring out their memoirs at a prodigious rate, not a single Frenchman concerned with the actual conduct of the great struggle has yet written a word on the war. I hear a rumor, however, that M. Clemenceau is about to write his memories and impressions of the last five years. He has, of course, written prodigiously—the word is not an exaggeration—in his day. He was little more than a boy when he started a paper called by the prophetic name of "Le Travail". In a sense it was a paper written for boys by boys, and indeed on one occasion "Le Travail" came out with a black border owing to the melancholy circumstance that its editor had been arrested for taking part in a student row! Even when leading the life of a very busy doctor in one of the poorest quarters of Paris he was writing all the time—sometimes violent articles over his name, sometimes literary essays under a pseudonym. Those were the days when "the tiger" was noted as a duelist. It is amusing to reflect that he once fought a duel (with swords) with Paul Deschanel. During the Dreyfus case, Clemenceau wrote one of the most famous series of articles ever produced in the brilliant journalistic history of France. It was published in "L'Aurore", a paper which was started in order to succor and help the famous prisoner of Devil's Island.

Clemenceau likes to keep in the closest touch with his friends, and is probably the only man in the world who has, or had, a post-box let into the wall of his bedroom!

III

I have been looking with intense interest at a big catalogue of new French school books. The way in which the education of the young was carried on during the war was one of the finest and least known things which happened in France during those terrible fifty months. As time went on it became quite clear that in the end every adult, whatever his age and condition, must help in the awful task of winning the war; and there arose the difficult question of how far the teachers of the country must be sacrificed. Sacrificed in a measure they had to be, but, fortunately for

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the future of France, every educated Frenchman is something of a scholar. The maimed, the halt, in some cases even I am told the blind, were pressed into service, in order that the future generation should not be lacking in that true culture which is the birthright of the majority of Frenchmen.

I was anxious to see whether the war would loom large in the new school books, and I am glad that on the whole it does not. One of the most popular of all prewar writers for children was Monsieur Bruno, author of a quaint and delightful book called "Le Tour de la France par deux Enfants". This book has actually gone into three hundred and seventy-eight editions, and it still costs the modest sum of 1 fr. 30. I see that the same writer now announces a book called "Le Tour de l'Europe pendant la Guerre par deux Enfants". An excellent school book which also bears on the war has a preface by Richepin. It is called "Notre France en Guerre", and contains extracts from the most remarkable war books published in the last five years. One is pleased to see that a real attempt is being made to teach the little French boy and the little French girl the English language! I note books called by the quaint Anglo-French title, "The Beginner's Comrade" and "The Second Year's Comrade". The French have long believed in the value of what may be called Eyegate, and the majority of French school books, especially those intended for the very young, are cleverly illustrated. The German language is not to be "taboo", for I see announced at the price of seventy-five centimes (fifteen cents), selections of the famous German writers, edited and explained by two distinguished teachers of German in the Lycées of Nancy (that lovely little town which suffered so cruelly from German bombs) and Montpellier.

The French were very much struck with the great kindness shown to animals by both the American and the British soldiers. I venture to think that one sees the result of this in the scholastic catalogue for animals, and the love of animals plays a modest rôle among the books cited. Of course there is already a whole literature in France devoted to cats and dogs, especially to the various hunting dogs which have long been the pride of provincial France.

Among reprints especially prepared for the young is "Washington Irving's Sketch Book", and among the foreign books which have thoroughly penetrated French life, is that which goes by the name of "La Case de l'Oncle Tom". Indeed it is not too much to say that "Topsy" is a familiar child character in French life—a further proof, if proof were needed, of the Gallic love of children, and the interest taken in their often pathetic mentalities.

IV

I hear that Paul Bourget is thinking of writing what should be one of the most curious and interesting after-war novels. The scene of the book will be laid in Paris, and the world described will be that of the Peace Congress. Now Monsieur Bourget has never written a *roman à clef*. It has been said, doubtless with truth, that his quite early novels, especially that wonderful and terrible picture of human nature, "Mensonges", contained portraits of certain Parisians well known in the theatrical and literary world of that day. But that has never been really proved and, in any case, the famous novelist never did what Daudet did in "Le Nabab", "Numa Romestan", and above all in "Les Rois

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en Exil". Not long ago a famous Frenchman said to me: "What would one not now give for a Daudet to evoke an imperishable vision of President Wilson, Marshal Foch, and Clemenceau as they appeared at Versailles this last winter and spring!" Perhaps Bourget is going to make an attempt to do something of the kind, —if so, the whole world will have cause for gratitude.

As I have already hinted in one of my former articles, Paul Bourget has not quite fulfilled the great promise of his youth. At one moment he seemed supreme as novelist and critic. Few better critical books have been written than his "Etudes et Portraits". When he took his place among the Forty he was the first Academician who belonged to the generation which had arisen since the war of 1870, and his election was regarded as a triumph for the younger school. Then, gradually, it began to be whispered that Bourget was too fond of the fleshpots of Egypt; that he was trying to attain that huge popularity which is, generally speaking, very remote from art. He was also cruelly described as writing to please "neurasthenic duchesses", but those who so criticized him forgot certain facts—and facts are stubborn things. One such fact is that women form the great mass of the reading public; another that Bourget, as a writer, may be said to have been only concerned with the description and analysis of what is after all the master passion of life, that is, love—love in all its poignant and painful phases. This being so, he was sure in time to attain wide popularity wherever the French language is spoken or translated. As all students of modern French literature are aware, Bourget has become, as the years have gone on, an intensely moral writer. He was always something of a philosopher, and now he is quite convinced that, as regards human conduct, "who breaks, pays". He believes that retribution comes even in this life; and if not in this life, then most certainly in the next. He also takes the old-fashioned, orthodox, Christian view of marriage and of all that Christian marriage implies in the way of abnegation, unselfishness, fidelity, and forgiveness. Life to Bourget is no longer a comedy; it is a drama. And thus he is probably one of the few writers of our time whose mood fits in with afterwar conditions as they present themselves to every thoughtful Frenchman and Frenchwoman.

V

Apropos of the effect of the war on literary drama, I hear that Brieux, who, just because there was a war in being, scored such a success in London with his once banned play, "Damaged Goods", is writing a play dealing with the effect of the war on French womanhood. Most French critics would tell you that Brieux is a social reformer, an apostle, anything and everything you like except an artist! It is true that his plays are all written with a purpose, but then so were those of Dumas *fils*, a great dramatist, and an artist if ever there was one. I may say that Brieux has been immensely influenced by certain American and English thinkers,—Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill, Malthus, and William James were certainly at one time the gods of his idolatry. In a literary sense his two great admirations are Goethe and Schiller. He is one of the very few Frenchmen alive who does not approve either of the French marriage-system or of the French method of educating the young; but those who regard him simply as a tiresome,

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moralizing preacher should read—or, far better, go and see—his wonderful comedy on married life, "Les Hanetons". In a sense it is a slight play, yet never was the mirror held up so closely to French nature, and indeed to all nature. The scene might have been placed in any civilized country, for it presents—with simplicity, shrewdness, good sense, and an utter lack of melodrama—the old eternal duel of the sexes when linked in marriage.

VI

It is quite clear that whereas almost every serious book published in France this winter will in some way touch on the Great War, the imaginative writers will make an effort to get back to studies in human nature pure and simple. As most of us are aware, human nature to the French novelist spells the deeper and, as a rule, the more painful problems of life. It is strange now to remember that, when the French divorce law was passed, many a French novelist believed that his occupation would be gone, and the French dramatist was even more concerned. The one exception was Victorien Sardou.

I remember having a talk with that wonderful old man about the whole subject. He assured me, with a chuckle, that the divorce laws, which though long in being, were only then beginning to leaven family life in France, would immensely widen the field, both with regard to the theatre and with regard to literature too. Of course he was right. He always was, whether the question under discussion dealt with some spiritual problem or with a hard material fact of life.

Sardou's hobby, as has been the case with so many brilliant Frenchmen, was what Michelet called "les petits côtés de l'histoire", and especially with the obscure and human-nature side of the French Revolution. I believe I am right in saying that it was he who first inspired Lenôtre to start on his now famous and world-popular series, "Old Houses, Old Papers".

Sardou, who was, I think one may say without fear of contradiction, the hardest imaginative worker of his day, yet found time to be one of the founders of the quaint, delightful "Intermédiaire", a French imitation of "Notes and Queries". To "L'Intermédiaire" Sardou was a constant and copious contributor, though never under his own name. Indeed he told me that through that source he had obtained an extraordinary amount of interesting information from quite obscure people, mostly Parisians born and bred.

He would start a literary hare in somewhat this fashion: "Does anyone know what became of the clothes worn at their executions by the victims of the guillotine?"

After a while answers would begin to drop into the office of the paper. A lady would write that her greatgrandmother had been guillotined, and that the family had bought back from her executioners the clothes worn by her on the fatal day. Then someone else would write: "I am a man of seventy; my father, who married late, as a young man was present when Danton's body was dug up. It was fully clothed, and in one of the coat pockets was a docket with his name upon it".

When Sardou thought it worth while, he would follow up the senders of such answers, and in that way he obtained a great deal of new light on revolutionary annals.

I fancy that few people are aware that Sardou was a spiritualist and a

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firm believer in omens and in prophecy.

VII

Apropos of spiritualism, France so far has remained singularly free from the wave which seems to have swept over both England and America. But I see that among forthcoming books is a translation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's book "The New Revelation". His Sherlock Holmes stories have a very big public in France, but I think I am right in saying that no translations of his spiritualistic writings have yet appeared.

The Catholic church does not allow the practice of spiritualism among her children, but the Greek church, curiously enough, puts no such interdict on the orthodox, and, before the Russian Revolution, Petrograd was the principal centre of the new revelation. On the other hand, it must be remembered that French people of every class not only believe in, but frequently consult, fortune-tellers, and all the Paris daily papers contain advertisements of men and women who claim supernatural gifts.

The most famous of these necromancers before the war was Madame de Thèbes. She was, it was whispered, a granddaughter of Dumas *père*. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that Dumas *fils* took a very great interest in her. It was he who suggested her striking nom de guerre, and he was a firm believer in her occult powers.

In everyday life, Madame de Thèbes was just a cheerful, stout, ordinary-looking French woman, but no one could doubt that she was an absolute and convinced believer in her own power of seeing what was going to happen, both as regarded public affairs and the lives of private persons.

Innumerable royal and imperial personages consulted her, and she once told me, with a good deal of simple pride, that King Edward, both as Prince of Wales and as sovereign, always paid her a visit when he came to Paris, giving her each time one hundred francs. Her usual fees were modest; she charged ten francs to those whom she regarded as not well-to-do, and twenty francs to the wealthy.

Every January, Madame de Thèbes published an almanac in which she set out to foretell the most striking events of the coming year. I believe it to be a fact that among her predictions were the death of Queen Victoria, the illness and postponed coronation of Edward VII, and the sinking of the "Titanic".

I myself possess her almanac of 1914; and in it she prophesies the murder of a royal personage about the time the Archduke Ferdinand was assassinated, the outbreak of the war, and the death of the Pope. As may be easily imagined, Madame de Thèbes's reputation as a fortune-teller was immensely enhanced by her 1914 prophecies, and she was constantly consulted as to coming events. It is on record that she foretold the end of the war long before it took place. On the other hand, from the very first she declared that the Germans would never enter Paris, and that the Kaiser would fly from his army and his country and become an exile. She also foretold a bad end for the Crown Prince.

Madame de Thèbes's own only son fell on the field of honor, and she died without seeing her predictions as to the Kaiser fulfilled to the letter.

VIII

What has become in England quite a famous book, "Married Love", is

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being translated into French, under the title of "L'Amour et le Mariage". As a matter of fact the theories and deductions of Dr. Mary Stopes, which have aroused much surprise and discussion in her native country, are already so fully accepted among French people that it will be curious to see what sort of a reception the book receives in France. Innumerable French novels have been written on the delicate themes which she treats with a most un-British candor. I can only recall to those familiar with the French fiction of yesterday the quaint and delightful "Monsieur, Madame et Bébé"; also certain passages in Marcel Prévost's "Lettres de Femmes". A more serious attempt to deal with the same subject was Bourget's "Physiologie de l'Amour Moderne". Yet another book of the kind, and one which provided many people with interest and amusement, was called "Du Mariage", by Leon Blum, published about ten years ago. The writer wrote as a bachelor, and either really gave, or pretended to give, accounts of marriages, happy and unhappy, fortunate and unfortunate, normal and singular, known to him personally! From the purely literary point of view Stendhal's famous book of the master passion of humanity still holds the field, and there can be little doubt that the book directly inspired Balzac's work on marriage.

Two war books which will be sure to interest even those who are tired of war books will shortly be published in Paris. The one is an account of the King of the Belgians and of his life with his gallant little army. The other is a personal and intimate picture of the sinister King of Bulgaria. Tsar Ferdinand, as he likes to be called, has always been of peculiar interest to the French, owing to the fact that he is a grandson of Louis-Philippe, and also that till he made up his mind to throw in his lot with Germany, he was in constant touch with the literary and artistic world of Paris.

I sometimes wonder how long it will be before the very great effect produced on French life, and especially on French provincial life, by the wonderful work done by American women and English women in war canteens, becomes reflected in French literature. I see with interest that a book is about to appear with the title "Notre Oncle d'Amérique, Souvenirs et Impressions d'une Parisienne sur les Travaux de la Croix-Rouge Américaine". Red Cross and canteen work were of course quite different; still they had this in common—that they introduced the average Frenchman to the self-reliant, sympathetic woman who, with no thought or hope of reward, had left her own comfortable home, surrendering herself and even spending her substance in the service of France. Sometimes when the worker was a quite young woman, the average Frenchman was somewhat shocked, and he would ask himself and sometimes other people, "Have these young girls any parents?" Nothing would have induced him to allow his own daughter to run such risks of fatigue, disease, and discomfort, even on behalf of his own beloved country. But there can be no doubt that the women who canteened and carried through this splendid work, builded better than they knew; and it is to be hoped that the day will come—may it be sooner rather than later—when some French writer of genius will arise to immortalize the work done for France by these cantinières.

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THE NEW HEDONISM

BY JAMES GIBBONS HUNEKER

"BILL, what's the New Hedonism mean?" Bill didn't answer at once. The two old rounders had turned into the Avenue at Twenty-seventh Street; yet their lips were perfectly dry. (Do you remember that snug little place east of Fifth? It's gone now, with other good things of life.) In one important feature the friends were alike: both wore spats. It was a spring midday. The vast concourse of croaking devil-wagons had not put in an appearance on the Avenue. It was too early. The big policeman at Thirty-fourth Street seemed bored. Time hung heavily on his mitted hands. Suddenly Bill remembered that Panky had asked him a question. What was it? He had been trying to form a sentence in the Daisy Ashford style, but could get no further than: Render unto Cæsar's wife the things that are suspicious. That sounded pretty good to him, and it was with a certain irritation that he mumbled: "The New Hedonism? Search me".

"I thought so", retorted his companion with a touch of triumphant malice in his tone, "after all these years associating with me—that is to say, with intellectual and æsthetic company—you can't answer such a simple question. And your slang, *toujours* slang! Say, William, what is the use of you encumbering the globe?" To this query no reply was vouchsafed. Bill was a tall, dry, military looking man of sixty or thereabouts. Little Panky was as obese as a suet ball. Some stranded newspaper man down at Mold's old drink emporium on University Place had christened the pair Don Quixote and Sancho Panza; but as life is real, and not fiction, their names soon degenerated into Bill and Panky. Oh, yes, we must not forget that both boasted noses of a delicate pink. (Uric acid, declared Panky; rum, admitted Bill.) They were not similarly attired, although you could see their cravats and waistcoats a block away. No monocles or any such begad nonsense. Only walking-sticks, and in Panky's case, eye-glasses. They were rounders, not bounders.

"The New Hedonism", began Panky, but he was interrupted—"Let's go to Brentano's. He has the real article". They retraced their lazy footsteps. Entering that arena where the battle of the books never ceases, they engaged a young woman in conversation. "The New Hedonism?" she inquired. "Of course, you mean 'The Moon and Sixpence'—that's about art, yes, no, yes?" She was quite earnest. Panky gave her an icy stare. "I think we mean Walter Pater." Armed with "Marius"—which, in the remotest psychoanalysis is the history of a fastidious soul that yearns for oysters out of season—they returned to the Avenue. Bill was surly. He muttered, "Is this a new game, or what?" Panky could have strangled him. "I'm tired of you, Bill; worse, I'm ashamed of you. We are wasting our day, as if eternity were a bank account to draw upon, instead of the few paltry years left to us. Our interval is brief.

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I mean to follow Pater's advice and live every minute from this time on, I mean to burn, yes, burn with a gem-like flame, with all the intensity of my temperament, and vividly to live in the arts æsthetic. What's more, old heavy-head Bill, I intend that you, too, shall burn, so be prepared to give your attention to the Seven Arts for the next twenty-four hours. Do you hear—burn!"

"I do burn", answered Bill. "Let's get another drink".

"A modern audience, but not a modern program", whispered Panky to Bill after they were seated. Carnegie Hall was crowded. Several hundred persons sat on the stage holding musical instruments. The conductor's stand was empty. The two old rounders stared at the well-filled boxes, and they discernd a mob aloft in the galleries. Ushers dressed like dancing-masters led latecomers to their places, and the air was noisy with the rustle of programs, women's shrill cackling, and the sharp ejaculations of children. Now, what's going to happen? thought Bill. He was secretly ashamed to ask more questions of Panky, after the little lecture on the New Hedonism. It was all very well for Panky to put on airs regarding the vibrations of æsthetic pleasures, but Bill preferred old-fashioned methods. Now, give him a sanded floor, a clean hearth, and the rigors of the wet game—hush! He was prodded by his mentor and he saw a beardless man in front of the musicians, who was bowing to the audience. "That's him, that's him, that's Beat-hoven, Bill. Now watch!" There was a wide unusual silence, and then the band, after being signaled with a wand by the leader, blurted out four smashing chords. Bill snorted like a war horse in battle: "That's the real noise, ain't it?" he said so loudly that a lady wearing ear-muffs and sitting ahead of them, sternly regarded Panky. The music swung on to a finish. It was built on two tunes—one short, lively, even "sassy", as Bill observed; the other would have melted the heart of a politician. After mixing matters so that no tunes could be picked out the music stopped, apparently short of breath. Panky clapped so hard that he slipped out of his pearl-colored spats.

"'Pon me honor that's fine! That's composed by the young fellow swinging the stick, or should I say, brandishing the baton. D'ye hear, Bill! He's Beat-hoven." Old ear-muffs gave them a sour glance and wiggled. Bill protested. "Where's the program, Pank, I think you're off your feed this trip. Hey! What, my New Hedonist! Read! That's not Beat-hoven conducting. That's Walter Damrosch. And it's the—the—hold on there—the fifth symphony in C minor—worse than Esperanto, this musical gibberish. I'm off to the street. No more New Hedonism for me in this shape. Downcast, Panky followed him, to the rage of a disturbed row of music-lovers. "How could I have made such a slip", he grunted. "Of course, it's a symphony by Damrosch. Beat-hoven is a back number. Holla there, Bill, me for the moderns. Where to, now?" "Let's get another drink", growled Bill, leading the way. "I'd rather be wrong than vice-president."

They moved down the Avenue with reticent majesty, their pink noses glowing; but in the eyes of Bill there was an expression of victory. What's the use of Hedonism compared with a new program? he asked himself.

"And now, William, compose yourself, for we are about to study the Seven Arts. Pater wrote—" "D'ye

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mean pictures and such?" interposed his friend. "Yes, creations in color, marble, and ink." "What's ink got to do with art?" "Lots. Wilhelm, I shan't make sport of you any longer. Ink is used in printing etchings—no, no, Bill, please no blasphemy! Don't curse on the Avenue. We are out for an intense, æsthetic day, and by Apollo, let us put aside coarse forms of quotidian life." Panky paused. "*Quotidian* is good, very good", he ruminated and mentally smacked his lips. "Ha, ha!" roared the other, "I knew that last one would fix you." Not a word was exchanged till they faced a picture shop. Suddenly Panky fell back and hoarsely exclaimed: "No, not in there, Bill, that's where they sell American art. We are after the Venetians, no American old masters for us." They proceeded in their quest. Then, ascending in an elevator, they entered a gallery. With æsthetic glee Panky rubbed his hands. He nudged his thin, yet phlegmatic, companion.

"Voyons! mon cher Guillaume." (Bedad! he's off on his French mare, thought Bill.) "Look! none but Venetian masters. What joy! Observe Giorgione's 'Lady Playing Shinny in the Bath'. What tones! Hey, what! Gashouse George, this painter was familiarly nicknamed by his contemporaries because he ran the waterworks at Castelfranco, near, as I well recall, Venice. I've been there—" "But ye didn't drink any of the water there, I'll swear", intercalated Bill, rather coarsely. Pank pretended deafness. "And that Tiziano", he continued, "what nobility of gesture as may be noted in the forthright outstretched arm. But a modern costume for an old Venetian!" Bill sniggered. "That's a portrait of his Honor the Mayor Hylanski addressing the Sachems at the Wigwam on Fourteenth Street, East." "Dear, dear, so is it. My poor eyes are growing weaker. I'll have to give my optician fits." He stuttered in his embarrassment. But Bill was relentless. "And your friend Gashouse George signs his name H-o-m-e-r; Winslow Homer, in full. What d'ye know about that, Pank?" "For gracious sake, Bill, let's skip. A man can't see a Venetian nowadays that some American hasn't stenciled his name on the canvas. He was completely flustered when they reached the pave. "As you say", gravely remarked Bill, "let's have another."

"It's a great day for the New Hedonism", declared Panky as they sat in their stalls. They had changed their cravats and felt as if in evening attire. The Ibsen soubrette was doing her turn. "That's one on me, Panky. What the deuce is an Ibsen soubrette?" "Easy", answered Panky. "An Ibsen soubrette is a girl who asks queer questions of her illegitimate stepmother. Don't you remember 'Ghosts'?" "I always fell asleep when the overture began", sneered Bill. "Naughty! but Bill, this girl is very clever. Listen!" Bill was restless. The girl looked across the footlights directly at him, and every time she lifted a foot she pointed her toes in his direction. It upset him, considerably. She sang a song about "Shaw and Ibsen down in Lisbon", which made a big hit. The playbill attributed the music to Richard Wanamaker Strauss. "What's the name of the piece?" demanded Bill. "Really, William", responded Panky, "I've left my glasses at home." "And your eyes at the Venetian picture show, eh, what? Never mind. Here it is. I can read it. 'The Hyper-Woman' by by—by—what's this, Neetshy?" "Bill, Bill, you're absurd. You mean by

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Nietzsche, don't you?" "Keep your shirt on, old friend. Nietzsche or Neetshy, what's the odds! And what the divil do they mean by having an Ibsen soubrette in a Neetshy play?" Panky gazed pityingly at his friend. "It's the New Hedonism," he averred. "To live one's life to the fullest—" "That ought to suit you, old sport, with the accent on the *full*", broke in Bill. "If that's what the theatre is coming to, then give me good old Harrigan and Hart's." "Well, why not?" exclaimed Panky in his brightest manner. "Why not Ben Greet, the landscape gardener of the Shakespearian drama?" "The only use I have for a garden", returned Bill, "is to grow mint in it. Let's get out. I'm athirst." Forth they fared.

"Wohin?" queried Panky, wiping from his tawny mustaches the amber foam—he had read Ouida. And he even changed his language to suit the nationality of his drink. "Home", curtly answered Bill. "Not so, my lazy cavalier. Here it is eleven o'clock, after a hard æsthetic day's work. What have we accomplished? Why, you haven't even answered my first question—What is the New Hedonism? We have sought for it in books and music and pictures, in the drama" —Bill sniffed—"but thus far our snark has proved naught but a boojam. Yet, it's the snark we are after, the fine æsthetic thrill, the consciousness that we have achieved the apex of ecstasy. Ah, Marius, my old friend—" Bill protested. "My name is not Marius—" "You are the true epicurean that Pater drew. Come—it's off to the most modern note in our complex culture—the cabaret." Bill yawned, but acquiesced. He confessed that he was semi-delirious with longing for liquids.

They went across town and descending a short flight of steps entered a large cabaret with a low ceiling. The crashing music of a bad band, the blue-white haze of worse tobacco, the clatter of dishes and the infernal chatter from crowded tables, disconcerted the two old rounders. They were not of this generation and for them music with meals was a desecration of the tonal art as well as the art of the cuisine. They were piloted by a condescending magnate to a table in the centre of the room, where rushing waiters and sudden little draughts found them. They tried a rabbit. Oh! They essayed an oyster stew. Oh! Then they attempted terrapin. Wow! The worst ever. Shouting across the narrow table they could barely distinguish the syllables that emerged from their parched gullets. Alas! Always parched. The band, after a variety of exotic caperings, began with vertiginous languor the "Weary Meadow" valse. Everyone started howling the banal measures and Bill almost became excited. "Say, what are they singing? 'The Grand Duchess'?" Panky again bestowed upon his antique friend a freezing smile. Bill saw and resented it. "Perhaps it's by your Beat-hoven", he ironically hinted. "It's the latest campaign song of the suffragettes", explained Panky as he forced himself to swallow a glass of Dieppe-Newhaven (Connecticut) burgundy. Bill arose. "If I don't get some air I'll explode." They pushed through aisles of artists and pretty ladies,—all in search of atmosphere, Panky suggested. "Monkeys and parrots!" he added, unconsciously quoting Henry James.

The two old cronies linked arms and slowly moved over Twenty-seventh Street to the Avenue, where after a brief halt they resumed their tedious

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march. "The fact is, Pank, my lad", said Bill in a voice of mollified velvet as they stood up before a mirror and a man in white—"the fact is that it's a great thing in this confusing world not to get off your beat. I don't care a hang whether a symphony is by Homer Martin or a picture by Beathoven. You don't, either—come now, own up! As for your Neetshy drama with Ibsen soubrettes and your cabarets, where the noise burns your ears, the liquor your tongue, and the bill your purse, why, Pank, you can keep them. I want no more of them. We are getting along in years, and it's a rotten idea to change your politics late in life. I like the 'Black Crook'. I like a story with a drink in it. I like Bierstadt's pictures—" "Naturally the name is evocative," Panky permitted himself to suggest. "I hate skyscraper music", pursued Bill, "and I like a man to stand when he takes a drink. Face the enemy—see! You've tried hard to educate your old pal today, Panky, but it's no go. You've only made me as thirsty as a prohibitionist. Let's get back to our cage. Let the boys and girls play their new-fangled games. What was that question you put up to me this morning?"

"What is the New Hedonism?" gasped Panky, now thoroughly exhausted. "But there's no use trying to make a man of culture out of you, Bill."

"Right you are, Panky. And I'll answer that question ere we turn in for the night. Here's to your New Hedonism! It's the same old stuff." They bowed pleasantly, one to the other, raised glasses and participated in the consecrated gargle. "Let's have another", cried Bill the epicurean.

Moral: It's an ill wind that reads the weather reports.

THE CENTENARY OF GEORGE ELIOT

BY LILIAN WHITING

I am an artist by my birth—
By the same warrant that I am a woman;
Nay, in the added rarer gift, I see
Supreme vocation.

ARMGART

GEORGE ELIOT holds an imperishable place in the realm of creative romance. Her five great novels, "Adam Bede", "The Mill on the Floss", "Romola", "Middlemarch", and "Daniel Deronda" stand out in the literature of fiction as do the works of the world-poets, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare. Not infrequently has wonder been expressed that a woman born into provincial life of humble degree; whose early surroundings and associations were not unlike those mirrored in "The Mill on the Floss"; who was in her thirty-third year before she had made acquaintance, to any extent, with London life; who was never affiliated with the social world—should yet have enriched literature with so remarkable an order of fiction, whose varied and complex characters represent so wide a range of human experience. Who can surprise the secret of such achievement? A critical study of her work no more offers the solution, than the scraping of a picture of Titian's, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, afforded him the secret of

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the great master's coloring. The achievements of genius defy analysis. Heredity, environment, influences, may all be subjected to the microscope of critical scrutiny and leave the student none the wiser. The creator of prose romance has two orders of material from which to draw,—one of observation and objective experiences; the other—far richer and more vital—of imagination and intuition. The latter is infinite and its only limitation is in the writer's ability to draw from it.

The story of George Eliot's initiation into fiction is hardly less fascinating than the fiction itself. There has been an impression that she became a novelist of distinction by sheer force of will; by the decision to enter on it; and that the emptiness of the pocket was a factor by no means negligible and perhaps even outweighing that of the fulness of the mind. To entertain this belief is to mistake the entire purpose of literature. The gift must be prior to the will, even though it is the power of the will that enables the gift to be of value. The fiction of George Eliot had its origin in dim visions that long prefigured themselves to her, until she might have exclaimed:

> . . . What fairer seal
> Shall I require to my authentic mission
> Than this fierce energy?—this instinct striving
> Because its nature is to strive?

This craving made itself insistently felt, and the first outer stimulus and assurance came to the novelist from Herbert Spencer, who discerned in her the novelist's power and confirmed her to herself. Their friendship began in about 1852, and from that time until 1856 her creative power was crystallizing, however unconsciously to herself. "September of 1856 made a new era in my life", she wrote in her journal, "for it was then I began to write fiction." She was then in her thirty-sixth year. "It had always been a vague dream of mine that sometime or other I might write a novel," she had added. This vague dream dated back into her early girlhood; and had it not been for a certain negative element in her character,—a lack of the joyous spirit which is compact of creative energy, an unfortunate tendency to depression,—her creative gift might have manifested itself long before. Despondency is a fearful obstacle with which to be weighted. All this innate attraction to the literature of creative romance had thus long stirred within her, and Herbert Spencer's encouragement had exercised its influence even before the suggestions and urging of Mr. Lewes had wrought their spell. But with her, as with all great artists, the secret lay deeper than the effect of any defined personal influence. In her later days she said to Mr. Cross that in all her best work there was a "not herself" which took possesion of her, and that she felt her own personality to be merely the instrument through which this spirit, as it were, was acting.

The outer life of George Eliot was uneventful, but the richness and wide inclusiveness of her intellectual life, with its lofty scholarship, its unlimited reading, its social contact with her fellow craftsmen, its depth of personal friendships, would offer the most interesting and vital material for many volumes. She was singularly sympathetic, and she entered easily into social interchange *à deux;* but it was in the *tête-à-tête,* and with not more than one person at a time, that her choicest conversational powers revealed themselves. There are traditions that on her Sunday afternoon receptions Mr. Lewes—who circulated about, witty, brilliant, charming every

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one,—would conduct guests, one by one, in turn, to Mrs. Lewes, as she sat in an armchair near the glowing grate; and to each one, in turn, she gave of her best, speaking in a low, but rich and musical voice. She had no easy play of conversational persiflage, nor social initiative with groups of people; her mind (richly stored as it was, and marvelously trained by her extensive scholarship and exquisite culture) was a trifle ponderous perhaps; she was very serious by nature, and it may have been the very lightning play of the temperament of Mr. Lewes that especially attracted her. Mercurial as he was, he yet united a steadfastness, and a persistence of intellectual energy that gave him prestige.

Marian Evans (christened Mary Ann, but afterward herself uniting the two names in one) was the daughter of Robert and Christiana (Pearson) Evans, and was born in Warwickshire on November 22, 1819. Her father was a land agent, and it is said that his character may be read in his gifted daughter's portrayals of Adam Bede and Caleb Garth. Up to the time of the death of her father (in May of 1849) her life had been in the country, with few external advantages; yet from schools and itinerant tutors she had been able to make far greater advances in scholarship than many a college-bred girl. She had become familiar with French, Italian, and German; she was an exceptionally fine amateur pianist; she had read the best literature, not only of the English, but of the French and German; she had herself entered on a translation of Strauss. And this impassioned pursuit of high scholarship and literature was constantly accompanied by her own writing, much of which was unpublished, but,—

> . . . the instinct striving
> Because its nature is to strive,—

constantly manifested itself. Her father's death released her from domestic duties and ties and it was then, in her thirtieth year, that she really entered on her individual life. Miss Evans joined her friends, the Brays, in a visit to the continent; and the midsummer of this year found her in Geneva after glimpses of Paris, Avignon, Nice, Milan, Genoa, the Italian Lakes, and Chamonix. She remained in Geneva until the early spring of 1850, completing there her translation of Strauss, and plunging deep into study and lectures, but apparently having but a circumscribed social life. The autumn of 1851 opened for her in London where she had been engaged by Mr. Chapman as assistant editor of the (then) new "Westminster Review". Someone has observed that the Divine Power that arranges a man's work for him in the future, in the meantime prepares him for the work. The life of Miss Evans, secluded though it had been, was yet that of profound study, of leisure for thought, and she came well equipped to the larger outlook that now beckoned to her.

She was a woman of profoundly religious nature; and while she became affiliated with the Positivists, and to some extent became a follower of Comte, there was nothing in this that might necessarily alarm anyone. She regarded Positivism as "one-sided"; she did not fully accept its doctrines; but she appreciated Comte as "a great thinker" and recorded herself as having been deeply moved by his "Discours Préliminaire". During the last months of her life, after her marriage to Mr. Cross, he read aloud to her this work of Comte's which had always remained one of her

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special favorites in literature. Of her attitude toward Comte Mr. Cross says:

> For all Comte's writing she had a feeling of high admiration, intense interest, and very deep sympathy. I do not think I ever heard her speak of any writer with a more grateful sense of obligation for enlightenment. Her great debt to him was always thankfully acknowledged. But the appreciation was thoroughly selective. Parts of his teaching were accepted and other parts rejected.

Mr. Cross adds that while she was a subscriber to the Comtist Fund, she was not directly associated with the membership of the Positivist sect. She gave to it a limited adherence. Contrary to some measure of general impression, she was a great student and a constant and devoted reader of the Bible. She acquired the Hebrew language and lingered always over the Hebrew scriptures. All her life she particularly loved the Bible and Milton. She loved Dante and read the "Divina Commedia" with more or less constancy, as she did Shakespeare. Wordsworth she valued highly. "The Prelude", especially, was included among the constant literary companionships of her life. Tennyson she held as having "a high place among immortals". Hallam Tennyson, in his magnificent biography of his father, records that Lord Tennyson had "the highest admiration" for George Eliot's insight into character, but "did not think her quite so true to nature as Shakespeare and Miss Austen". The present Lord Tennyson adds in a note that his father thought the character of Adam Bede "too much idealized". Lady Tennyson noted in her diary (under date of July 22, 1871) that "Alfred" and Hallam, going to the station to meet the Gladstones and finding they could not arrive till a later train, went to call on Mr. and Mrs. Lewes; and Lady Tennyson adds: "She is delightful in a *tête-à-tête*, and speaks in a soft soprano voice, which almost sounds like a fine falsetto, with her strong masculine face."

In the outer life of Marian Evans, known to the world as George Eliot, the most important event was her union with George Henry Lewes, which occurred in the summer of 1854—a union of intense mutual happiness only terminated by the death of Mr. Lewes in the November of 1878. The story of this is so familiar to all that it need not be dwelt upon here. Mr. Lewes had been the victim, so to speak, of his own forbearance and goodness of heart in having condoned a second offense of his wife; and for this reason, according to the English law of the time, he could not obtain a legal divorce when, for the third time, she left him, as a finality. Two years later he was introduced to Miss Evans by Herbert Spencer, who had asked her permission to bring this brilliant *littérateur* to call upon her. From their first meeting the mutual attraction made itself felt, and in later years Mr. Lewes wrote of his immeasurable debt to Herbert Spencer "who first introduced me to Marian, and to know her was to love her". Perhaps the most just characterization of this union is that made by the late Reverend Doctor Charles Gordon Ames of Boston (the friend and successor of James Freeman Clarke), that it was "illegal, but not immoral". George Eliot herself wrote to a friend:

> If there is any one action or relation of my life which is and always has been profoundly serious, it is my relation to Mr. Lewes. . . . Light and easily broken ties are what I neither desire theoretically, nor could live for practically. Women who are satisfied with such ties do *not* act as I have done. That any unworldly, unsuperstitious person who is sufficiently acquainted with the realities of life can pronounce my relation to Mr. Lewes immoral, I can only understand by remembering how subtle and complex are the influences that mold opinion. . . . We are leading no life of self-indulgence, except that, being happy in

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each other, we find everything easy. We are working hard to provide for others better than we provide for ourselves, and to fulfill every responsibility that lies upon us.

No mother could be more devoted than was she to the young sons of Mr. Lewes. They were largely educated and established in life by the proceeds of her novels; she made for them a home of comfort and affection. A desolate and forsaken household was, by her presence, transformed into a home of beauty and sweetness of life. George Henry Lewes and Marian Evans went before an assemblage of invited friends and solemnly covenanted with each other to live as husband and wife. Because of existing laws, as I have said, the union could not be legalized, and it lacked the consecration of the church. So far as mutual love and fidelity could give consecration, the union lacked nothing. And there we must leave it.

A graphic picture of the Sunday afternoons held by Mrs. Lewes (as she was always called) at their home, the Priory, was given by Kate Field, who first met them in Florence in the winter of 1860 when Mr. and Mrs. Lewes were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Adolphus Trollope, and Mrs. Lewes was making her studies for "Romola". Kate Field was then a young girl of twenty, studying music in Florence, and domiciled with Isa Blagden, Mrs. Browning's most intimate friend, in her villa on Bellosguardo. At a reception given by Mrs. Trollope, where the Brownings, Walter Savage Landor, Pasquale Villari (then known as the "young Sicilian friend" of Robert Browning), Frances Power Cobbe, Harriet Hosmer, Dall' Ongaro (the Italian poet), Robert Lytton (later Lord Lytton and known to literature as "Owen Meredith"), and Isa Blagden were all among the guests. Miss Field wrote later of Mrs. Lewes as she appeared here:

> There she stands quietly in the moonlight on the terrace, speaking earnestly to Adolphus Trollope, while Lewes hovers near, calling her attention to the exquisite beauty of the lights and shades made by the moon. One by one the guests are presented to the author of "Adam Bede", who receives all with shrinking diffidence. More and more I wonder if Mr. Trollope will remember the American girl, in the corner; there I sit, very dejected, when the host leads George Eliot to see a Madonna above my head,—I am discovered, I am introduced, and my heart beats quickly as she takes me by the hand, and seats herself beside me. . . . The expression of her face is gentle; her manner singularly timid. . . .

Something of that magnetic responsiveness that characterized Miss Field in her later life must have stirred in her then, for after recounting the conversation of Mrs. Lewes, she adds: "To think that George Eliot should be telling all this to a schoolgirl!" A few years later Miss Field was in London and she thus describes a Sunday afternoon with Mr. and Mrs. Lewes:

> Sunday was their reception day. From three till seven the cleverest men and women in London felt honored in being received by the quiet woman who sat by the fire with her back to the window and talked earnestly in almost a whisper, while Lewes pervaded the atmosphere, speaking first with one and then another. . . . At every "private view", at every fine classical concert, George Eliot was sure to be present, dressed unobtrusively, and seemingly oblivious of everyone around her. She loved music ardently and was herself a pianist of no mean order. Once only did I succeed in luring her away from the Priory, and that was to see the telephone, about which she was very curious. She visited the office of Alexander Graham Bell one afternoon, and for an hour tested the capability of the telephone. "It is very wonderful", she said; "what marvellous inventions you Americans have!" . . . I have had several letters from her—many more from him. His are more brilliant, her temperament not lending itself to the epistolary touch and go. . . . A noble intellect, a great heart, this was the real George Eliot.

The essential life of George Eliot is to be found in her great novels. Of the quality of her work Dr. Edward Dowden said: "Among artists who, with Shakespeare, united breadth of

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sympathy with power of interpreting the rarer and more intense experiences of men, George Eliot must be placed." With this breadth of sympathy and the power to interpret the more significant experiences of human life, was united her literary conscientiousness that never allowed her to put forth what was less than her best. As Henry James notes, the real life of the artist is in the sense of having done one's best. George Eliot was never led astray by the worship of false gods. Her fiction was initiated in the autumn of 1856 by the writing of "The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton", the first of the clerical sketches. Mr. Lewes sent the manuscript to John Blackwood as the work of a friend of his. Mr. Blackwood did not express himself enthusiastically over it, although he accepted the story for his January number, and intimated a wish to have the refusal of any others by the same author. For this story George Eliot received a check for fifty guineas. When the entire series had been completed Mr. Blackwood offered her a hundred and twenty pounds for the first edition, while "Adam Bede" brought her more than twelve hundred pounds. A line in the author's diary for October, 1857, tersely states: "Began my new novel, 'Adam Bede'." It was completed and published in the spring of 1859.

To the artist—and the more artistic the nature the more entirely is this true—every new undertaking is a new experiment. The very consciousness of having achieved one success sometimes makes it seem impossible to him that he shall ever achieve another. George Eliot was no exception to this experience. To Major Blackwood she writes, in May of 1859, that she now feels assured that "Adam Bede" was worth writing, but that it seems impossible to her that she shall ever write anything so good and true again. "I have arrived at faith in the past, but not at faith in the future", she adds. It was not until the assured success of "Adam Bede" that the identity of George Eliot was revealed to her publisher. "The Mill on the Floss" was completed in 1860, after which Mr. and Mrs. Lewes made an extended sojourn on the continent, and she began "Romola" which first appeared serially in "Cornhill" in 1862, and for which the magazine paid her seven thousand pounds—this not interfering with her further gains when it appeared in book form.

The novels justified that dim vision that had fallen upon her in early years. With George Eliot, also, the Gleam,—

> Moving to melody,—

found her; and she, too, could have said of the Gleam,—

> Who found me at sunrise
> Sleeping, and woke me
> And learn'd me Magic!

As in Elizabeth Barrett Browning England produced the supreme woman poet, so in George Eliot she produced the woman novelist who, while she is rivaled in some special features of art, yet in the vividness and scope of her creations, the skill of grouping on a large canvas, the power of philosophic scrutiny brought to bear on the problems of life, the keen and relentless psychological analysis, the absorbing interest of the story itself,—in these George Eliot must be held as a supreme artist in creative romance. For among other virtues and graces the novel must be interesting! The reader has a right to demand that. Charlotte Brontë may be held to have surpassed George Eliot in a climax of thrilling intensity. In following the tragedy of Grandcourt's death by drowning in the Mediterranean, for

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instance, the reader is perhaps not wrought up to such an intensity of interest as he is when breathlessly asking the cause of the sudden interruption of the marriage ceremony between Jane Eyre and Rochester. It will be conceded that George Eliot has a more varied play of sympathetic interpretation than Scott, and that, in some respects, she is more artistic than Thackeray. But it is when her novels are taken in their completeness, that one realizes the extraordinary breadth of the panorama of life unrolled by the magic of her art. In the vividness with which even the incidental figures are sketched we see the masterhand. "Chad's Bess", darting across the scene while "Dinah" is preaching; "Jocosa", whom Mrs. Davilow requests to sit at the window as chaperon while Gwendolen receives Herr Klessmer—are modeled with the same perfection of care bestowed upon Rosamond Vincy, Mr. Casaubon, Dorothea, or Sir Hugo Mallinger. What depth of insight and brilliancy of thought are given in such passages, for instance, as that where poor Gwendolen arouses Herr Klessmer's artistic wrath by her unconsciously patronizing expression that if she could do "nothing better" she would be an artist!

"Do nothing better? No, my dear Miss Harleth, neither man nor woman could do anything better, if you could do what was best or good of its kind. I am not decrying the life of the true artist. I say it is out of the reach of any but choice organizations—natures framed to love perfection and labor for it. . . . An honorable life? Yes; but the honor comes from the inward vocation and the hard-won achievement; there is no honor in donning the life as a livery."

What scene before the footlights was ever more entrancingly vivid than that of the interview between Daniel Deronda and his mother, the Princess Halm-Eberstein? "Not quite a human mother but a Melusina", with her striking personality; and covered, save her face and part of her arms, "with black lace hanging from the summit of her whitening hair to the long train stretching from her tall figure." And her words, "Another life? Men talk of another life as beyond the grave. I have long since entered on another life!"

Can we forget how George Eliot warns us of that "perilous margin" we are on "when we see ourselves led passively, with dull consent, into shabby and insipid achievement"?

What a very duel of words between Stephen and Maggie when they discuss the moral problem involved in their life:

"The natural law surmounts every other," said Stephen; "we can't help what it clashes with."

"It is not so, Stephen," she replies; . . . "if we judged that way there would be a warrant for all treachery and cruelty: . . . if the past is not to bind us, where can duty lie?"

"But there are ties that can't be kept by mere resolution," he rejoins; "what is outward faithfulness? Would they have thanked us for anything so hollow as constancy without love?"

"That seems right—at first," Maggie rejoins; "but when I look at it further, I am sure it is not right. Faithfulness and constancy mean something else than doing what is easiest and pleasantest to ourselves."

Nor can one forget Sir Hugo's shrewd counsel to Daniel Deronda:

"Be courteous, be obliging, Dan; but don't give yourself over to be melted down for the tallow trade."

In "Romola" stands a novel wholly apart from the others. By what necromancy the author invoked the very living figures of the fifteenth century in Florence to rise before the reader, by what nameless magic Savonarola is summoned up from the "vasty deep" until one sees the dominant monk of San Marco and hears his thrilling voice, passes the imagination.

In seeking the clue to the transcendent power of George Eliot, may

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it not be suggested by the analogy of music, when the master transposes, at will, a creation from one scale to another? Does not the author transpose the drama of common life to the plane of spiritual movement and unseen causes? On this panorama she throws the searchlight of spiritual illumination. The emotions that Tennyson would have portrayed in the guise of a Launcelot, a Vivian, a Merlin, she portrays in the homely characters of provincial life in England. She has no Ulysses, no Lady of Shalott; nor does she resort to other climes and ages as does Browning when he portrays that most impassioned human tragedy in "The Ring and the Book". No. Her tragedy is played by poor Gwendolen, by Grandcourt, that "remnant of a human being"; by little insignificant Hetty, by sturdy Adam Bede, by self-conscious Arthur Donnithorne. Nor like Stephen Phillips does she seek a Marpessa or an Idas. The Poysers, Sister Pullet, with her trophies of medicine bottles; Bob, the pedlar, and Mrs. Glegg with her gruel; Tom Tulliver, Lucy, Maggie, Stephen Guest,—it is in this cast that she reveals the spiritual drama of human life. Perhaps it may be claimed for George Eliot that, more than any other novelist, she habitually dwells in the atmosphere of high thought. She went to her morning task as to a sacramental altar. Her daily work was preceded by reading from the Bible and from "The Iliad", or other lofty works.

While she has written poetry, some of which the world might not so willingly let die, George Eliot was still not a poet. The mystic chrism had not descended upon her. She was not touched with the divine fire.

The marriage of the author to John Walter Cross took place on May 6, 1880, and her death followed in December of the same year. Mr. Cross and his mother and sisters had been for many years among her nearest friends. She was singularly dependent on companionship and this, in their mutual sympathies in art, literature, and the problems of life, Mr. Cross preeminently gave her, even though he was more than twenty years her junior. They went at once to Venice where she renewed her enjoyment in that enchanting dream city. Returning to England in the autumn, they were domiciled at Number 4, Cheyne Walk, on the Embankment, with their books, music, friends. Their tastes were eminently congenial and apparently they had entered upon a felicitous chapter in life, when a sudden cold, caught by a draught in the theatre where they had gone to see "The Agamemnon" performed in Greek by Oxford undergraduates, caused the illness that closed the earthly chapter of her life on December 22, 1880.

Frederick W. H. Myers, speaking once of an evening when he walked with George Eliot in the Fellows' Garden at Trinity, recalled how she, "stirred somewhat beyond her wont", spoke impressively of God, immortality, duty. "I listened, and night fell", said Mr. Myers; "her grave, majestic countenance turned toward me like a sibyl's in the gloom." It may be that the message of her enduring romance could not be more perfectly presented in three words than in these of duty, of immortality, of God!

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THE LONDONER

LONDON, *November* 1, 1919.

I FEEL almost as if my youth had come again as I look at some of the books that are to appear, that have appeared, and that are to be serialized this autumn. Well do I remember the thrill with which I used years ago to read the announcement of a new book by Anthony Hope, or Stanley Weyman, or Gilbert Parker, or A. E. W. Mason. It is years since such a thrill has stirred my marrow. One gets blasé. Besides, as the man said, "I don't read books: I write 'em". However, I have been rubbing my eyes, for I see before me a new Anthony Hope, variously recorded as very good and very bad. I read a new novel by the retired Stanley Weyman which is being serialized and which will shortly appear in book form, as though Mr. Weyman had never given up novel-writing at all. I am constantly seeing the name of Sir Gilbert Parker, no longer as a politician, but as the author responsible for tales of the wild youths and their feminine counterparts. And a new story by A. E. W. Mason is to begin very soon in a popular monthly. How long ago it seems since these writers were in the full glory of popular acceptance as the best that our modern literature could offer! The temptation is to look upon them as back numbers, and to pretend that they do not exist for the present-day reader. Nothing could be more false. Some of the romantical writers were very good.

Anthony Hope was certainly, at his best, an extremely good novelist, with whose works I have a very thorough acquaintance. And he once did me a singularly pleasant turn. He gave a lecture upon dialogue in fiction. Now, Anthony Hope knows as much about dialogue in fiction as anybody has ever known. He knows it through and through. His dialogue has always been a joy to any reader with the least sensitiveness to such matters. As I had the good sense at the time to realize this, and as I could not discover beforehand the place, date, time, etc., of the proposed lecture, I took the course—the bold course, since I had then published only one novel—of writing to Anthony Hope to ascertain these particulars. My negotiations with other authors have always been marked by a little hauteur, and so my inquiry was certainly not couched in fulsome terms. To my overjoyed amazement, Anthony Hope replied in the most charming letter I had ever, until then, received. In effect, he said that the interest of a fellow novelist was a jolly compliment, and would I please accept a ticket for the lecture (it was enclosed). After that, how could I have done anything but appreciate the extremely witty and urbane lecture which this specialist gave? It was full of value and insight. It was, what to me is better than most things in that line, technical. He spoke as an enthusiast, and he spoke as a novelist. The lecture was the most illuminating literary address I have ever heard. It cleared horizons in a way that was almost uncanny. I have never met Anthony Hope, and most probably I never shall

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do so; but he did a young writer a good turn in the most graceful possible way, and I shall always remember it with gratitude. I shall go so far as to read his new book, for pleasure.

* * * *

Anthony Hope, as I expect everybody knows, is one of the pillars of the Authors' Society, which Bernard Shaw describes as his "trade union". Personally, I have no use for the Authors' Society, which has yet to introduce the standard contract and so protect young and idiotic writers from being fleeced by the few really disreputable publishers in London. There is, of course, no reason why young and idiotic writers, who would be better dead, should be protected, but the Authors' Society exists to protect the writer without business experience, and the standard contract should be its first care. However, Anthony Hope is not responsible for the inactivities of the Authors' Society, although his legal knowledge (for he is one of those novelists who, having had a good education, was called to the bar and then turned to the more congenial profession of literature) would probably be of service to the committee entrusted with the work of dealing with the problem.

* * * *

A. E. W. Mason, whose new story is announced as the next serial in "Nash's Magazine", is, I suppose, somewhat younger than Anthony Hope. He started a good many years ago with romantic stories of a rather unusual type. I allude to "The Courtship of Morrice Buckler" and "Miranda of the Balcony". My recollection of these books is somewhat hazy, as it is of "The Philanderers"; but the latter book I know to have been a modern comedy of manners. His great success, of course, was "The Four Feathers", a tale of a young man's rehabilitation in the matter of personal courage. Mason has a gift for yarning, but his books are nothing like so interesting as his talk. He is a most delightful person. He seems to have been everywhere and to have done everything that it is possible for an athletic man to do. Unpunctual to a fault, charming and disarming in manner, he will sit and tell the most exciting things as if they were just rather jolly little tea-party anecdotes. Some of his tales of personal experience would make any "temperamental" hair stand on end. He has a knack of getting into the real thing straight away, and of finding his way through it somehow.

For example, the tale of his adventures in Mexico, to use the hackneyed phrase (which I never believe when anybody else uses it), is more exciting than any novel. In this case the phrase is a true one. It is far more exciting, far more live, far more human and rich in wisdom and experience of life, than any novel Mason has written—and than any contemporary, dealing in such work as Mason's, has written. The pity is, that it is not written in a book. That it will be, one day, I believe; but there is a good deal that perhaps could not well be said even now. But when that book comes, if it has any of the thrill of his personal narrative, it may well be a masterpiece. The scene Mexico, the characters desperate men, the observer a practised novelist with a quite rare gift for sizing up a situation or a character. Imagine that man humorously, and yet not too humorously—for Mason has a good deal of the genuine daredevil in him—observing the constant change and development of a whole situation of

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extreme peril and international importance, when a slip might mean any sort of disaster, and you will have some notion of what such a book as he would write would be. Positively, my mouth waters for this book! I trust it will be forthcoming.

* * * *

This question of the kind of novel which was being written twenty years ago and the kind of novel that is being written now, and the kind of novel which is to be written hereafter, to which I made a passing allusion just a moment ago, is one which many of us would like to understand. In particular, I have discussed it with a number of men upon whose early perception of new tendencies the general public is a little dependent. All agree that all the talk about a "new" kind of novel is the merest drivel. All agree that there always has been, and there always will be a demand for stories of action, for stories which deliver the goods in whatever genre they may be. According to outsiders, of whom there are always a number who exalt their personal tastes into a general predilection, the psychological novel is doomed; but wise men do not make these wide and sweeping assertions. They watch the success of particular books, and they watch the growth of reputation of particular writers. From these observed data they draw modest inferences. They would like to understand upon what secret principles popular taste works, but I do not find that they venture to go very far in interpreting this taste in general terms. To do so would be to allow themselves to be ridden by set ideas, and that is the final infirmity of the candid and cautious judge.

The thing is a mystery. The most experienced publishers will pass a book which afterward, in the hands of some possibly more perceptive (but generally luckier) house, achieves a great success. He who could unfailingly descry the potential sale or success of a book in manuscript would command any salary in the literary profession. He would be a god among men. He does not exist. He is a dream person. If any reader of this causerie has the smallest idea that he knows what will please anybody but himself he is living in a fool's paradise. He knows nothing. All that any of the men with whom I have discussed the point tell me, is that the good book generally finds its market sooner or later. And if that market is a small one the writers of the good books in a vein little popular can always console themselves with the admiration of the elect. If they have the admiration of the bulk, writers in more popular veins do not, I notice, care so much about the opinion of the elect. After all, while the author likes praise, he does not really care very much for the opinion of anybody else. He is his own most favorable judge, explanatory, defensive, shrewd, and extremely generous. It is good that he should thus be immune from the corrosion of outside criticism.

* * * *

Talking about criticism reminds me that J. C. Squire, whom I mentioned last month, is starting a new monthly critical journal, the first number of which is due in November. It is to contain articles on all sorts of subjects interesting to the young and old intellectuals of England. It is to have creative work, by which I suppose poetry to be intended. And it is to have many pages of reviews. Those who know the skill of the small band of writers who will work under

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Squire will expect something good. The new venture is very much more suited to the taste and talent of its editor than was the now rather cumbrous "Land and Water". The latter paper goes on, but Squire relinquishes the editorship. The new periodical is to be called "The London Mercury", obviously upon the model of the "Mercure de France". Oddly enough, the English title gives a different impression from the French, I suppose because we have a number of daily and weekly newspapers scattered about the provinces which use "Mercury" as a part of their title. Everybody who takes an interest in the due and just appraisement of modern writing should look out for "The London Mercury". So far as one's needs are not met by the "Times Literary Supplement" and "The Athenæum", the new paper will be a boon. Its survey will be monthly, and, I gather, selective rather than comprehensive.

* * * *

Other publications are imminent. I hear of all sorts of new journals to illustrate the contemporary spirit. What they will be like I cannot imagine. The contemporary spirit seems to me to contain such a lot of harmless guff that I long to see it effectively displayed. We have already one or two periodicals of a minor order which are busy producing the work of the young persons who are writing poetry of a post-impressionist order, or drawing drawings of a futurist and cubist kind. Apart, however, from one or two unquestionable talents which are in danger of getting overrated simply because of their superiority, the greater part of those engaged in supporting these flimsy sheets would be better employed in earning an honest living in publishers' offices and learning what a difficult art is the writing of good books and the making of good drawings. I have just had a chat with the editor of one of the projected journals. He is keen upon popularizing modern art, and so the journal is to represent the artists rather than the authors. When I see this man's work, which is really remarkable in a style that I detest, all the arrogance of the plain man comes out in me. I look at the pictures, and I say, "What's *that?*" And then I think of the effort to popularize such pictures, and I imagine every philistine in the country looking at the picture and saying derisively, "What's *that?*" Nevertheless, this man's determination to popularize his art is better than the simpering oddity of such a curious little journal as "Art and Letters". It is extraordinary that such clever and delightful people as the Sitwells, Aldous Huxley (who knows as much about French literature as anybody in this country), and T. S. Eliot, who must rival him in the knowledge, should combine to produce anything so feeble. Whatever new papers we get, and, as I have said, they are many, will be largely dependent upon the same people for their contributions. Let us hope that there will arise an EDITOR! that rare and wonderful creature. Without *him*, the young lambs will be lost, and the periodicals go astray into the wilds of silliness.

* * * *

As far as one can judge from the preliminary announcements now available, the coming season is not, in England, at any rate, going to be one of those that are remembered and talked of as marvelous. I gave the other month the names of most of the possible plums. Most of the books of which details are now forth-

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coming are the sort that one had imagined were already written and published. So the season will hardly be a record. Meanwhile, of course, that astounding work, "The Young Visiters", goes on selling in the way generally imagined as peculiar to hot cakes. There is every prospect that the English sales will total a hundred thousand copies by Christmas. This, in England, is very good. The greatest successes do not as a rule reach a figure of that kind. In its original form, boomed as it was from many of the pulpits of the country, and read and loved by so many people who did not ordinarily read novels, but who wanted some reassurance about the war, "Mr. Britling Sees it Through" never, I believe, touched the hundred thousand. Yet that was the biggest success I have watched. "The Young Visiters" is already in the eighties.

Talk about the book continues unabated. Did Barrie write it? Did he revise it? These inquiries are the least insidious that one hears. Great scrutiny of the author's portrait takes place. You hear people saying, "It's an *old* face", and implying that the author posed for it in mature life, specially for the purpose of mystifying the British public. Now I will betray a secret about this portrait. I heard all about it from the author herself. It is *not* strictly contemporary with the book! It represents Miss Ashford as she was a few months *before* the book was written! It is *not* a portrait of Barrie with a wig and without his moustache! It is a real portrait of an extremely gifted little girl who had written stories for years and who went on writing them for some time after the completion of "The Young Visiters", which, however, is her masterpiece. The last book I have seen is one called "The Hangman's Daughter", a mature work written at the age of fifteen or sixteen. This has certain colossal scenes, but as a whole is more like conventional novels of the past. It will not, I believe, be published. I hope it will not, for the public is fickle, and if once the great and truly astonishing success of "The Young Visiters" were interrupted by the publication of another work of similar character, who knows?—the first book might fall out of favor, without having its place taken by the later tale.

But Miss Ashford is not the only talented member of the family, for another sister was responsible, also at a tender age, for a surprising novel called "The Jealous Governess". In this book, a nursery governess, with curiously doubtful views on the subject of salary, is so envious of her mistress's baby that she determines to get one of her own. She goes to the local doctor and presents her demand. He, reasonably enough, asks whether she is married, and is told that she will submit even to this inconvenience if only that will make his production of the baby certain. He promises to do his best, and on the following day the governess receives, by the hand of his messenger, a box containing a new little baby, accompanied by an invoice reading: "To one baby, £1". Unfortunately the governess does not know as well as the author does that very fresh babies are less pretty than those of the more advanced age to which the mistress's baby had attained. She is therefore disappointed, and I am sorry to say she destroys the baby. What follows I forget, but the tale is full of lugubrious charm, for the governess certainly kidnaps the baby which has aroused her envy, and it is not until the end of the book that the boy,

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grown up and unrecognizable, returns to his surviving parent. That, as far as I recall, is the end of the story.

Verses belonging to this period in the life of a precocious trio of children survive, very religious in tone; and also delightful drawings, in color, representing scenes in the life of the two parents. Altogether, a most versatile family, a fact which is sufficient in itself to show how wrong and how tediously overclever are those who still say that no child could have produced a work so naïvely and exhilaratingly amusing.

* * * *

I observe that Grant Richards, in his advertisements in the "Times Literary Supplement", refers to a practice which seems to be growing among American publishers of sending copies of books published in the United States to English papers for review. I do not know what is the origin and aim of this habit; but it has obvious disadvantages. For one thing, if English readers, encouraged by the enthusiasm of a review of a book of American origin, apply to their booksellers for a copy of it, the book is unobtainable. Few people will agree to wait until a copy is obtained from New York, or wherever the book may be on sale. The matter therefore lapses. But should some English publisher take notice of the review, and say to himself that a book so good as this must be worth publishing in England, he finds, or foresees, that if he takes copies of it for sale in this country, and sends out copies for review in the ordinary way, the papers which have noticed the American edition will ignore the later English publication, so that his interest in the book is lost and his stock lies dead upon his hands. The point is one worth mentioning, because presumably the American houses which have adopted the custom have some definite object. I suggest that it defeats itself from the start.

German publishers, to continue in this absorbing topic of the trade, waited only until the restrictions upon intercommunication between their own country and the British Isles were removed. The moment intercourse was allowed, they methodically began writing to English publishers. They need, it appears, all sorts of English fiction to translate. Fiction of the sensational order was what they first demanded. I wonder how much English and American fiction is now in process of being rendered into German! We know, of course, that very notable English works were translated into German in the course of the war—for example, "Mr. Britling Sees It Through", and, no doubt, "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse"! But the wholesale demand, I admit, has come as a surprise to me. Another noteworthy fact is, that the firm of Tauchnitz at once submitted statements of the sales of the English books already incorporated in their well-known library since the outbreak of war. The numbers are striking. In 1915 practically no copies of any English or American books (I can speak only, of course, of the accounts which I personally saw) were sold; but since 1915 the sales have steadily increased year by year, until, in 1918, they were considerable.

In England there have been partial attempts to keep pace with German letters, but the books issued under authority have been limited to works of serious scientific or historical interest or of sensational absurdity. We are now promised a glut of books dealing with the war from the Ger-

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man side. All the famous leaders of the German armies and the German navies and the German foreign policies and social policies have written books which are to be translated. The prices paid for these books by some English publishers are said to be fabulous. I am pretty sure the sales will be less fabulous than mythical, apart from such leaders as Ludendorff and those of nearly equal importance. But a great deal will depend upon the quality and the trustworthiness of the books themselves. It is upon that trustworthiness that their importance depends, and as for any "revelation" and consequent popular excitement, the kind of thing required for a real "boom", I do not anticipate it. Nor does anybody else who knows the publishers, the booksellers, and the readers of this country.

Much the same sort of thing applies to the works of our own generals and other leaders. Things have come to a point where the public is impatient of most things relating to the war. The period of disillusion and cost-counting has set in very hard; and there is a sort of disinclination to talk of the war or to read about it. This, natural as it is, must make those who deal in such things as war books tremble for their ample investments in the narratives of our fighting men. All now turns on the intrinsic interest of the books. If they are dull, they will drop dead. If they are good, then everybody will feel bound to surmount the obstacles put in the way by natural distaste for anything about the war and will read the books and urge others to do so, purely on account of their qualities, and in spite of their topic. The fact is not surprising, but it shows very clearly how quickly the reaction has set in. Matters will presently grow normal again; but only when the sheaves of self-defense and self-explication have had their day and their value has been appraised by the test of interest and importance. Nothing good dies, but a merciful oblivion overtakes the superfluous.

SIMON PURE

TRANSFORMATION

BY CHARLES L. O'DONNELL

I KEPT a beggar's hut till Love
Knocked at my sullen door;
I knew not what a spirit then
Footed that earthen floor.

No lights were in his tangled hair,
His bare feet bled with cold,
But all his frail hands chanced upon
Flamed into sudden gold.

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HENRY MILLS ALDEN

BY JAMES LANE ALLEN

BACK in those tidal years of our native fiction when Henry James and William Dean Howells appeared as riding on the crest of the one national wave and everyone else as wallowing or drowning around them in the trough of the sea,—with three or four monthly American magazines as the lonely lighthouses of their hope or their despair,—back in those surging years there one day fell into my hands by some unremembered chance a copy of Mr. James's brilliant and provocative novel, "The Portrait of a Lady".

I was teaching in the University at Lexington, Kentucky, at the time; among other subjects, teaching English. That is, true to pedagogic type and temper, thumb and thumb-screw, I was, as a salaried official of education, engaged in painfully making known to classes of rapidly growing but perhaps of not quite so rapidly learning young Americans, what the English language is and how the English language should be written. This major operation—performed then, as it everywhere usually is, at a minor desk—involved the demonstration of how bad has been the English sometimes underwritten by the great, even by the greatest; and a triumph of the entire method lay in stretching an immortal as a *corpus delicti* on the dissecting table before the student body for the extremely impressive exposure of his extremely unimpressive faults.

But if a man is a paid pedant and authorized egotist to others in his lectures, he will be that identical pedant and essential egotist to himself in his library. It is there indeed when, alone with the masters, he has them, as he thinks, at his mercy and holds himself in unrestraint—it is there that he will freely indulge the passion and practice of disparagement which he may finely call his devotion to art, but which is much more likely to be his devotion to his vanity. Egotism is an insatiate flame of the mind; a flame must have its fuel; and to sustain the steady incandescence of self-love, what fuel burns so safely, so cheerfully, comfortably, is so cheap and so abundant, as detraction?

It was altogether in the pedagogic nature of things, therefore, when one night I entered upon the reading of Mr. James's novel, for me to discover on the first page that I did not approve of the way in which the author had written it. Not a line of fiction had I ever written; but the fact in no wise interfered with the conviction that Mr. James with his genius, art, care, and experience combined, had not opened his novel quite so well as I could have opened it myself. This avowal should instantly make me known, as it critically makes me kin, to certain historians and professors of American literature in some of our foremost universities of today, to certain teachers of literature in some lesser colleges, to certain editors of literary weekly and monthly magazines, to certain book reviewers for some of our great daily newspapers—all of whom, as occasion arises or does not arise, hardly cease by implication

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to suggest to their readers that they —these historians, professors, teachers, editors, and book reviewers—are the intellectual and æsthetic superiors of the novelists of our civilization, and that if they, now, had but written the creative literature of this country, what a literature it would be. (Quite so: what a literature it would be!)

In those distressing, dogmatic years, such must have been my own folly and infatuation as related to the matter in hand. For putting pen to paper, I forthwith demonstrated how imperfect as a piece of literary art Mr. James's opening was, entitled my derisive, destructive essay "The First Page of 'The Portrait of a Lady'", and dropped my improvement into the mail.

There flourished in the New York City of the period a literary weekly whose peculiar claim it was to offer its readers only such reviews as were prepared by expert authority. Perhaps its occasional activity might be described as that of fostering the criticism of distinguished attack. I regularly read this aggressive periodical, and to it naturally forwarded my distinguished attack on Mr. James. Promptly there reached me from the editorial office an acceptance and a check.

The Christmas holidays had just begun. Quickly converting the check into money and part of the money into a railway ticket, I took the first train to Cincinnati, to hear in its vast, shadowy, sonorous hall the music of "The Messiah" which I had never heard but now was to enjoy through alleged initial blemishes in "The Portrait of a Lady". Strange biographical bedfellows—"The Messiah" and "The Portrait of a Lady!"

The weather was bitter cold. The trains, as trains in that part of the country in those days did, ran slowly. The traveler with his face close to the frosty window could, if he chose, study the landscape and have time to fix its pictures in his memory before they drifted by. The long scene out upon which I looked was winter at its worst: wild, dark, pitiless to the creatures caught there and howled at, rushed at, by winds grey and furred with snow, the tireless wolves of the air. I looked out upon it all, in me the warmth, sunlight, song, flower, of youth's immortal summer.

For I had entered, as I believed, a world that winter could not blast nor summer blight, the timeless world of literature. The first thing that I had ever written and offered for publication had been accepted, paid for! Mr. James was a resounding name on that vast, mountainous upland of letters. I had successfully attacked him. He would read my article and be thunderstruck. Mr. Howells would read it and secretly, quickly, tighten the screws on all *his* first pages. Mr. James's publishers would read it and look at one another with blank faces, upset, uneasy. The regular reviewers of Mr. James's books would disparage me, envious that they had been less keen or less courageous. My friends would read it and say: "This is what I have always known you were destined for!" Whoever opened the pages of that austere and occasionally brutal periodical would encounter the article as its opening essay and bring his eyes to rest upon a new name, never before printed.

With all this glorious young summer of imaginary success within me and the ancient winter of actual defeat on the landscape before my eyes, there took shape in my imagination and sympathies a sequence of verses to picture the contending spirits of

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the two,—joy confronted in nature always by suffering, life chased by death.

When my mad holiday was over and I returned to Lexington, I hunted up a little printing shop, chose from the printer's stock his finest paper, chose from his assortment the fittest type, and had him bestow upon my verses the finality and perpetuity of a stray leaf from an imaginary volume of much read poems—a method and a solace well known always to poets of the unpublished. I sent my stray leaf of perpetuity to the editor of "Harper's Magazine", not knowing who he was, and from the editor of "Harper's Magazine" I promptly received an acceptance and a check.

More had come, far more, than that. There had come the opening of a pathway, and in that pathway I was henceforth to walk as my road of life, lead whither and how it would—a country bypath: at one end in certain green pastures I, native to them; at the other end, seated beside a great highway of the world and looking at me out of its dust and din,—quite suddenly and unexpectedly looking at me with recognition of the first stroke of creative work,—Henry Mills Alden.

As soon as possible I took that pathway straight toward him. He had accepted my first verses; he accepted my first short story; he told me, upon examination of several pieces of my work, that what I lacked was the discovery of a definite field; he gave me in complete trust my first commission for an illustrated article on "The Bluegrass Region of Kentucky"; and now looking backward upon the men who variously influenced my course in those first groping and rather baffled years, I see him as the one who, with a sign to me, walked to an unseen gate, pushed it open, and pointed to the onward road.

Through this incident concerning myself, which would be out of place here except as the natural approach to this memoir of him, as indeed the story of the only way I ever came to know him at all,—I arrive at the explanation of how by request I happen to be writing of him now: it is with the purpose of placing widely and usefully on record, as a capital illustration of the American way of doing things, the manner in which he, a great representative editor, bore himself toward one unknown beginner as toward any other unknown beginner; and of putting down a few of the many thoughts which, slowly in the flight of years, have settled about him as a representative influence in American literature and a representative character in our American civilization.

What is one sure test of a man's being ordinary? What but your inability to see little or nothing else when you look at him? What is one positive proof of an extraordinary man? Is it not the incitement he creates within us to think of many things, great things—remote from himself, greater than he? Call to mind any commonplace person of your acquaintance and observe how your thought shrinks to him, becomes tightly fitted over him, cannot get loose, cannot reach anywhither, dies out on him. Call to mind any foremost man of this country now or of any other country or of any other time, and consider how he draws attention to himself only to force attention away from himself, only to scatter it outward upon the world.

To this rank of representative and extraordinary men belongs Mr. Alden. To think of him is almost to forget him; to write of him is almost to lose

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sight of him personally. He concentrates attention only to radiate attention. He is not the end of the mind's road; he becomes a starting point of the mind's journeys. Paths branch off from him, leading all over the America of his active years, leading out of this country altogether into various other countries of the world, leading out of this world altogether—across time—into eternity: a man with his nearer vision busily sweeping human affairs, but with his face set steadfast throughout his whole life, in ultimate inquiry, toward the infinite.

With fewest words, therefore, the personal relation with him will be dismissed as an unimportant, irrelevant, all but impertinent fact, in order that he may be viewed broadcast over the fields of innumerable lives, entering into their histories and thus into the history of our civilization: to him nevertheless all human history itself being but a brief sowing and reaping, with the constant return of the puzzled harvesters into the one eternal creative mystery.

When I, an empty-handed stranger from green Kentucky pastures, arrived in New York on my life's adventure into literature and, presenting myself at the Franklin Square offices of Harper and Brothers, inquired whether I could see Mr. Alden, I was directed to go upstairs and see him.

He was then in the full maturity of his powerful years—a virile-headed, virile-bearded, virile-eyed, virile-voiced, virile-handed man; robust all over, humanly warm all through, thoroughly masculine in bodily fibre, bodily build; instantly—by virtue of something superior, almost majestic, in his make and mien—to be apprehended as set apart from common men in an uncommon way, though long you might look to see and vainly ponder what that way meant in finality to you and to countless others.

Instantly noticeable as issuing from such a massive, rough-hewn head and body was his voice: so low that you seemed not to be hearing, but to be overhearing, him speak to you. Thus low not because he was so close or because he may not have wished his conversation to be overheard outside his office, but because in no circumstances could he have been a loud-voiced man. His words as slow to follow one upon another as they were low to fall upon the ear; but when once started, flowing on and on, gravely, unbrokenly, as though gotten ready before you arrived and but waiting to be released at you whatever the subject you had come to present. Such an instantaneous impression did he create of universal editorial preparedness. As the result of this same preparedness, able to sit there a tranquil, joyous worker,—easy master of the vast, disordered, tense, and troubled human scene which constantly changed yet never changed in that crowded corner of our civilization.

No hurried editor he; no worried editor he; never as you entered receiving you with an air that you had interrupted him; never as you stayed intimating by voice or manner that his duties pressed and that you had better go. Open to your approach, responsive to your mission before you stated it, self-conscious in his courtesy, with no tawdry trappings of authority, without a trace of affectation or rag of vanity. So that as he greeted me that first day I think of him as greeting the others on their first days—that interminable line of people pressing from every direction in upon him year after year for more than fifty years. Greeting them with the same formula, which must in the

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constant dash of the human waves have long ago become as smooth as a stone polished in the tidal reactions of the ocean—his formula for all comers: "I see that you feel yourself a beginner and a stranger. We are used to beginners here: they are welcome. If there were no beginners, we should soon reach the end of our labors and our usefulness. And there are no strangers. Not here. Strangers are for the world of convention, of artifice, of distrust. Here reality is the only thing and reality is everything. What, then, in reality do you seek and what of reality do you bring? Of all the things that are being done to advance our American civilization and to expand our common humanity, few are undertaken as our duty in this place. If you are vitally concerned with these few and are of any vital concern to them, let me at once see how."

Out of that total office experience, then, out of the long editorial scene, two main ideas emerge—for my mind at least—and divide between themselves the whole truth of the matter. One idea is personal to Mr. Alden, begins with him and ends with him, sets him aside, and itself drops out of view. The other idea is not personal to him or to any other man, but relates to this country, to something in this country that is characteristically American, to something in this country that may not be set aside, to something in this country that lasts on and on and that will remain in full view while this country remains this country and the genius of its institutions continues unchanged.

The purely personal element in the editorial picture is the small bare physical fact,—liable to be taken for granted as ordinary or overlooked as of no significance,—the unique, obscure, bodily fact that Mr. Alden could sit there and enter into business relation with his fellowmen at just that crucial nearness of a few feet, at arm's length, with his shoulder all but rubbed against any man's shoulder. Few editors can do that, few have done it, perhaps none. Few men of any profession can do it. Few men of any kind can stand such a test, can endure to subject themselves to such an ordeal. Your visitors can look you too closely in the eye for your own comfort. They have your worst hidden traits, the weakness and the evil that is in you, at too close range and thus at a disadvantage. You have no room for the free play of the things which you can use against another at a distance. Moreover, an interview granted at the very portal of the ear presupposes confidence, promises sympathy, announces a workable and working fellowship, constitutes a bond, gives a pledge. Few men will give such a pledge. Few will feel such confidence. Few will offer such fellowship. Few will even understand such instant sympathy, universal brotherliness.

It is on the score of its singularity, therefore, and on the score of the solitary virtue residing in the singularity, that I feel persuaded to cite this mere office-door fact as giving entrance to the inmost essential truth of Mr. Alden's entire editorial personality and policy. It was his way of work in life; he made it beneficent and he made it beautiful.

But at this point the passage becomes direct and easy from the personal element of the picture to the element not personal, to the element representative and American; Mr. Alden in his editorial offices ceases to be a unique personality and becomes representative and American; the edi-

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torial offices, themselves, of Harper and Brothers in Franklin Square cease to be merely their property and become representative and American. That highly technical, necessarily restricted and most difficult corner of our civilization—the corner of our periodical literature—becomes typical of every other highly technical, restricted, and difficult corner of our civilization, standing for what each may. And the master-worker, master-builder—sitting there in his corner, keeping it as unconfined and accessible as every man's out-of-doors, making it the open hilltop of every man's equal opportunity—becomes typical of all the other master-workers, master-builders, making all the other corners the open hilltops of equal opportunity; the total of their work, the total of the master-builders' work of our civilization under the genius of our institutions, representing to the whole world the impartiality, the freedom, the expansiveness, the roominess, of human life in the United States.

Thus Mr. Alden, his life-work, further expands into an incident, a mere illustration, on one of the two main roads along which as a nation and a people we have moved to the doing of all that we have done. It is fit, it is timely, to declare here exactly what those two roads are.

One is known as the noisy road, the noisiest in the world—and we in it are reputed to be, and perhaps in part are, the noisiest of modern civilizations. The other—the little known or the unknown road—is among the quietest if not the quietest of all human historic highways, and we in it have always been in far greater part among the quietest, if not the quietest, of the workers of the earth.

Certainly, notorious to every other modern nation is the noisy American road and the vast total noise of Americans traveling it: that most stupendous sound on the planet—the futureward rolling din of the United States; a din in the physical ear of the race, a din, confusion, to the philosophical thought of the race. But certainly, too,—what the rest of the race seems not to have discovered, what has been but dimly, obscurely, if at all perceived even by those American historians who have undertaken to interpret individual leadership and mass-movement among the people of the Anglo-Saxon new world,—is the other main road, the second of this nation's characteristic highways. That is the quiet way, the quiet American way of doing great things—Mr. Alden's way. It is by this quiet way that most of the great work of the nation has been done. Not among noisy but among noiseless Americans are to be found most of the nation's greatest men. Just as not amid noise but in quietness have lived the vast main body of the American people who constitute the foundations of the republic, its strength, its order, its simplicity, its peace.

August, indeed, and hardly to be paralleled in any other modern nation would be the historic assemblage of those great Americans who have gone about their work, have done their work, have finished their work, and stepped forward into the everlasting silence without a sound about themselves. Great silent American surgeons and physicians, silent astronomers and physicists, other scientists, great silent discoverers and inventors, justices and judges, professors, men of letters, artists, ministers of th gospel — master-workers along th quiet American way: their labors offered to humanity, their names offered to oblivion. Mr. Alden was one of them.

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Sometimes the common, every-day, unnoticed sun, as it goes down, pushes away the clouds by which all day it has been surrounded, withdraws its rays from every near or distant object which they have been about to reach, and moves forth upon the darkening sky, a lonely shape, a dimmed splendor, a fulfilled orb of earthly good.

THE CHICAGO BOOK FAIR

BY FANNY BUTCHER

THE Book Fair was the great event in Chicago during the week of October 13. One hundred thousand strong, Chicagoans—from the cognoscenti, the book-loathers, the spend-thrifty, and the just plain thrifty to the yearners after knowledge and autographs—gazed with awe upon the imported and domestic warranted-first-water authors, looked over the fall styles in books, squashed their noses against the cases sheltering precious manuscripts and priceless sanctified pens and inkpots, turned to their neighbors and in one breath exclaimed, "Great idea!"

It was a great idea, a little greater than many of our front literary families realized. It was the first time that a book fair of that sort had ever appeared on any stage. The great idea came from the mind of one person, Marcella Burns, head of the book department of Marshall Field and Company.

Four or five years ago Miss Burns was lured into an automobile show after a hard day's work, and choosing an expensive and dressy car, she sat down to rest and watch the world pass by. While the world was asking about ignition and carbureters and the difference between centre and back-axle drives, and discussing the relative merits of aluminum and brass trimmings, Miss Burns was wondering why no one had ever thought to give a book show where the public could look over the latest things in books, ask questions about the way they came to be written, how many volumes were published each year, shake hands with a few real authors, and all that sort of thing. She figured out that many of the visitors who were ambling by in crowds at the automobile show didn't own a car and had come to scoff, but would undoubtedly go home to pray for a car. And she decided that many might look upon a book fair in the same spirit, and go home and take the baby's playthings out of the bookcase and dust off the shelves, and start filling them with what God intended as adornments for book-shelves.

It was a great idea five years ago, but Miss Burns knew that it would mean the expenditure of a lot of money by Marshall Field and Company and the close cooperation of the publishers; and her department at that time was very young. Then there was the war. And even in our prosperous neutrality we weren't trying things that were new—at least not things that had to do with such unimportant commodities as books!

In the meantime Miss Burns studied up the annual exhibits of the publishers at the National Arts Club in New York, where the fall books are exhibited and a large reception is held

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which is attended by the publishers, their most productive authors, and the booksellers. I went to one of those exhibits once and I must confess that it was one of the dullest crushes I was ever in—and I was young enough then to be thrilled at the thought of seeing real authors face to face. Despite the fact that it seemed as though everybody was present and so were his sisters and his cousins and his aunts, really it was only the favored few who had the opportunity of putting on their soup and fish, as Ring Lardner says, and whispering: "Which one is Hamlin Garland—that young man over there with the tortoise-shell glasses or the tall, bushy-headed man leaning over that funny woman with a rose in her hair?" The dear public stayed outside around Gramercy Park. That sort of book show was for those inside. It gave nothing directly to the public.

The Leipzig and Frankfort exhibitions were too much like world's fairs —and too inherently German!—to offer many suggestions. And by the way, there's an interesting page or two about the Leipzig exhibition in Solomon Eagle's "Books in General" which has just come out. The concluding paragraph, written in 1914, is amusing. "Amongst the German authors whose portraits grace the walls of the exhibition is Mr. George Bernard Shaw. They have naturalized him, like Shakespeare, and the next thing will certainly be a statue in Weimar."

So it was something entirely new, entirely informal, and entirely midwestern that was formulated in Miss Burns's mind. She went overseas to do hospital work and there laid the last brick in her scheme. The finished edifice sprang full-armed from the head of the third floor of a department store—a queer enough place in a big city like Chicago which boasts the second largest bookstore in the world!

The Book Fair was an unqualified success for more reasons than that it was a good idea. Somehow from the moment it opened on Monday morning it took on the spirit of a neighborhood festival. That sort of thing can not be planned for in advance. Friendliness either is or it isn't, and in this instance it was, with a capital F. Everyone talked to everyone else. Publishers were questioned by high-school girls and members of ladies' aid societies in the same breath. Collectors and men who were suspicious about buying books because they already had one, were jointly standing in awe before a beautiful portrait of America's beloved Theodore Roosevelt, and were telling one another how much they missed him. Little girls who had just read "Under the Lilacs" and old women who still surreptitiously took out "An Old Fashioned Girl" for comfort, stood eagerly in line to see Louisa M. Alcott's little desk and Meg's bonnet and the dolls that the "little women" used to play with. Ex-captains and privates still in khaki got into heated arguments over the respective merits of their divisions in front of the originals of C. LeRoy Baldridge's great "Stars and Stripes" cartoons which have been made into a book, "I Was There". And the lowliest could and did touch the hand of the leader of the young English novelists just as if he were Mr. Flavery's son who lived next door.

There was a quarter of a block of space devoted to the Fair, and it was apportioned among the sixty publishers who exhibited. Each publisher had a table for the display of his latest and best, or a booth lined with shelves

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and glass cases. The publishers did their own decorating and arranging of books, and Marshall Field and Company came along at the last minute and scattered vases of chrysanthemums here and there, to give the last touch of festivity to the picture. In the cases were manuscripts and letters written by immortal pens from Tennyson's to Daisy Ashford's, through Kipling, Conrad, Mark Twain, Roosevelt, et al. Original illustrations were everywhere. On the tables and shelves were fall books from the latest juveniles to the latest editions of the Bible, with the old favorites now and then. There were two bindery exhibits, one of a commercial bindery where they were using processes which it has taken two hundred years to bring to their present efficiency, and one of an artistic bindery where exquisite hand-tooling was being done. From very inexpensive children's books in one corner one could go to a nook in the other corner where a jewel-encrusted Keats valued at $3,500.00 was surrounded by other volumes less extravagantly but none the less beautifully bound.

Each day had its extra added attractions in the persons of authors who had a golden opportunity to judge their Chicago audiences *en masse*. On Monday Hugh Walpole was clamored for by an orderly and adoring mob, but none the less a mob. The popular and brilliant young English novelist came to find himself much better known than he had ever dreamed, to realize what it means to be the author of a best seller. George H. Doran, his publisher, brought him out and had to rescue him from his readers' enthusiasm. He autographed copies of "The Secret City" and "Fortitude" (the two books which are evidently the favorites of the Chicago public) until his writing hand became numb. But one must admit that the English are sportsmen. He never stopped autographing! Before his identity was established no man with tortoise-shell glasses was safe from "Oh, Mr. WAL-pole!" When the solid-looking, bank-presidential, smiling-faced, twinkly-eyed lion actually was found, —and without tortoise rimmed glasses, —the mistaken ones made up for their mistake.

On Tuesday the Chicago authors—who were in Chicago, they seldom are —held a little reception and reunion with themselves and their readers,—Henry Kitchell Webster, Mary Hastings Bradley, Clara Louise Burnham, Emerson Hough, Clara Laughlin, Mary Dickerson Donahey, William Gerard Chapman, Georgene Faulkner, Keith Preston, and Clara Ingram Judson.

Milo Winter, on Wednesday, was the side-show who drew the crowds away from the big tent. He explained how he decided upon what to illustrate in a book, and then he proceeded to make some illustrations, much to the unwavering delight of the assembled multitude.

Thursday was Cape Cod Day, with the Cape's best little press agent, genial and chummy, giving a lecture in the morning and another in the afternoon. Joseph C. Lincoln, come alive, and Joseph C. Lincoln in print are so beautifully one and the same person that he raises the batting average of all authors in the game of humanness. Like Hugh Walpole, he autographed until his writing hand was almost paralyzed. And he forced the admission that Americans are good sportsmen too.

Eddie Guest's right arm was lame, also, after Friday afternoon. He read some of his poems, and imme-

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diately the audience rose as a woman and as a man and demanded autographs—and got them! On Friday thirty-four members of the library class at the University of Wisconsin—which is the entire class—came down to the Book Fair, and the University paid half of their railroad fare as part of their library education.

Saturday was children's day, but from the sea of visitors that flowed and ebbed about the booths, it was also a day for everyone who wanted a final hour or so among the literary treasures.

Educational exhibits often cost a merchant great sums of money, and the results from them are not felt immediately. Crowds go to see, but do not buy, or they buy in some other department. Miss Burns had hoped to stimulate a dormant interest in books, and to give books a place in conversation somewhere near the high cost of living and the coal strike. But she did not expect the sales of her section to take an immediate leap and burst the statistical thermometer. But that is exactly what they did. Everyone who came to the Fair wanted to take home a souvenir,—something he or she had bought as well as the books, pamphlets, and reproductions of illustrations which were given away at the various publishers' booths. One man chose as his souvenir a thousand-dollar set of books, but the more modest visitor bought a new novel, a long-wished-for volume of poems, a leather-bound copy of a favorite book, or three or four picture books for the children.

When the Fair closed Saturday afternoon at five-thirty, there was a little ceremony of gratitude participated in by everyone concerned. It had been a week of unbounded success for everyone.

The public, first of all, had come into personal and intimate contact with men who write books, men who make them, and men who sell them. They had watched the making of a book, had looked into the methods of illustrating a book, and had proudly shaken the hand of an Author. There had been broken down that barrier between manufacturer and ultimate consumer which makes the ultimate consumer think that the manufacturer is a supermillionaire cushioned in the feathers plucked from the dear public. They found the publishers "just folks", and they realized that the making of books is not, like the making of pork sausage, a business whose profits are counted only in dollars. They realized, many of them for the first time, that there are publishers and not just one publisher of all the books in the United States; that books can be things of beauty physically as well as spiritually; that for a dollar and a half they often buy the work and the hopes of a whole year of one man's life; that—thousands of things about books that booklovers know, but that the man who goes to the pool hall at 7:45 every night and the woman who plays bridge on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Damengesellschafthall never even thought of. The public certainly got its money's worth, and was loud in its appreciation, buying four times as many books as it usually buys.

The publishers were all more than satisfied. They got one thing very definite, I should say—a look straight into the eyes of the Chicago public. Chicago is a city of people who play pretty much in their own yard. We have a feeling that New Yorkers think we're a rube village. We always suspect that Easterners who stay in the East and do business with us, are sniffing at us. But when they take the trouble to come to see us—we're

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all open-armed to them. And we're really very simple and genuine when we're approached in friendliness. The publishers and their salesmen had a rare opportunity of meeting the Chicago book-buying public face to face, and they will undoubtedly find it a profitable meeting.

Miss Burns plans to make the Book Fair an annual event at Marshall Field and Company, and she hopes that other cities will use the idea. Her only fear is that it may be cheapened by an attempt on the part of economical booksellers to copy the Book Fair inexpensively—an attempt which would wreck the idea. If any bookseller believes that there is such an animal as an inexpensive book fair, list unto what a small but chirpy bird warbled in my ear. Ten thousand bright and shining dollars went into the week's jollification. A lot of money—but it couldn't be done for less, and it was worth it! For the Book Fair did exactly what Miss Burns had dreamed of its doing that night when she watched the crowds pass by the automobile show. It actually sent men and women home with a new or a rejuvenated longing to own more books.

NEW NOVELS OF SUBSTANCE

BY H. W. BOYNTON

I SUPPOSE everyone more or less recognizes that there are at least three kinds of novels "in his business": those he gulps with joy, those he chews with satisfaction, and those he rolls permanently under the tongue as part of his literary cud. All good to the taste, but the third how rare! What determines their status as cud-books? Not deliberate choice, not considerations of loftiest art or highest imaginative plane. Think of the people you know who run through Trollope and Jane Austen every year or two, because they can't keep away from them. Between-times the current stuff, the novels of surprise or sensation or wild adventure or mental excitation—but always back, for comfort, to Barset or Somerset. Who can reread without a thrill the opening lines of "Persuasion"?—"Sir Walter Elliot of Kellynch Hall, in Somersetshire, was a man who, for his own amusement, never took up any book but the Baronetage. . . . " And yet nobody can ever have been thrilled by reading them the first time.

I am not getting ready to assert that the books mentioned in this article belong to the order of "Persuasion", and will be delighted in a century hence. But in looking them over as grouped by a gradual selection on my shelf, I seem to feel that there is uncommon substance in them. I should say they might all be worth not only a reading, but a rereading. You may chew them without wasting your energy, and you may even find one or the other of them cuddable, for all I know.

"The White Island" is quite different from the others. Michael Wood has written several earlier novels impregnated, like this one, with Roman Catholic feeling. They are not novels of propaganda, but fiction based on a

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sincere and, as it were, consecrated mysticism. Stories of saints are common enough, of the "religious" who have devoted themselves to contemplation and the devotional life. But the Réné of this tale is not a saint. He is a sort of inspired dullard. He is queer in childhood, but children *are* queer. The troublesome thing with him is that he does not "grow up". He cannot learn lessons, and his fancy is dominated with the lifelong vision of a white island, dwelling-place of some pure spiritual energy which he senses but cannot define. He is the son of a distinguished and worldly pair who, as the years go on, begin to despair of his future. They have built on his making a great place in the world, and are faced with the question as to whether he is not actually a defective. He cannot concentrate his mind on school studies. At twenty he shows no signs of mental maturity. Specialists incline to agree on him as a "case" of arrested development. At last the parents find a kind of solution in placing him with a Father Standish, who is at the head of a rural House of Retreat. At Brent Réné opens his heart to the good father. He cannot learn the things they want him to learn, he says, because he is "held fast by something else". . . .

"It is something so tremendous, and I am such a speck in comparison, that I do not know how it is I am not blotted out in it entirely. It claims all I am, and all I have; there is not a single thing in me, mind and body, it does not claim. I cannot learn or remember things which seem to me to have no real value, no real existence, no life in themselves. That is to say, I cannot learn or remember while this tremendous Something holds and claims me."

"What is this Something?" I asked in a low voice.

He blushed suddenly like a shy girl.

"I think", he said in a whisper, "it is God."

"Do you mean", I said gently, "that you are always thinking of Him, Réné?"

"No", he answered in the same whisper, "I am not thinking of Him, Father. It is He who is thinking of me. His Power flows down on me, and I—I drown in it."

At Brent Réné takes his unassuming place at first as a guest and, later and more happily, as an assistant gardener. He is not specially devoted to formal observances, but gives forth, quite unconsciously to all appearance, a powerful current of spiritual healing. In the end we see him, through Father Standish's eyes, as a visible focus or receptacle of divine force,—not "a case of arrested development", but "a case of a crystal cup for Living Water". The effect of such a tale as this hangs on the manner of its telling. The restraint and delicacy and sincere emotion with which this book is written may prove it to be worth re-reading.

Among recent American novels "Saul" and "The Choice" seem to stand out for me as both fresh and serious interpretations of current American life and character. "The Choice" is written with something of Theodore Dreiser's apparent artlessness and even crudity of touch. Primarily it is a very careful study of a single feminine type. For Asenath is typical both in her limitations and in her primitive virtue as a mate. On the surface, she is such a daughter of the people as in romantic fiction we often see transformed, nature as well as manner, in order that she may make the gentlemanly hero happy. The beggar-maid disappears for a year or two, to be licked into shape, intellectually and socially; and returns the perfect lady of the hero's requirement. Or she simply mops up her education from him as he casually spills it after marriage. In "The Strangers' Wedding" W. L. George went to the other extreme and undertook to show how, in default of equality of birth and breeding, a marriage is bound to be pretty well hopeless from the start. His vulgar young wife cannot change her

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point of view, and his young husband cannot stomach that point of view or the habits that go with it. In "The Choice", we seem to be upon the same road. Asenath McBride is presented without glozing but not without sympathy. She is a telephone girl, daughter of "a foreman in a packing-box factory", in some small city that I believe remains nameless. She happens to have the "beauty of Madame Vigée le Brun", is fastidious in the care of her person, and does not lack a rudimentary æsthetic sense. She uses only the commonest counters of speech, but her silence is golden. At eighteen she expresses her impulse manward in this fashion:

"Mamma, ain't I old enough to have company?"

"What kind of company?" inquired Mrs. McBride, with a reasonable show of caution.

"Boys", answered Asenath.

"What boys?" asked her mother, still on caution bent.

"Oh! No boys in particular. You know I don't know any boys except them that come to Sunday School and they make me sick."

"Well, if you don't know any boys to have for company, what makes you ask about it?"

"I was just thinking about it. Suppose I should get an introduction to some nice fella. I'd feel awful cheap if I couldn't ask him to call."

Mrs. McBride is not unresponsive to this eloquence. She "speaks to father" about it, and presently there is a vulgar Tom, to be tried and found wanting, followed by a pretentious Rawlings of the sleek, clerical type. The McBrides are too much for his none too stable pride, and the jilted Asenath remains for a time at a loose end. But there are better fish in the sea. Her instinct for acquiring the best available thing in due time displays itself in the conquest of Larned, a young teacher with high hopes and a fine mind. Her beauty charms him into the fancy that he can mold her mind to his liking. Their love-making period is mingled with a comedy of education. But soon after their marriage Asenath's mental dulness and sloth become evident. She has no real interest in her husband's interests or ideals. The time comes, after the birth of their first child and the domestic reconstruction following it, when the hopelessness of their being real companions excepting on the domestic plane, comes home to both of them. Asenath is mentally inert; she cannot change, but she is not too dull to recognize her limitations. Nothing could be more banal on the surface than the scene in which their mutual discontent comes to a head; but in substance it is as at least as "true to life" as that similar scene in Mr. George's "The Strangers' Wedding" in which so different a conclusion is reached. These twain have come together; have made their choice, or perhaps had it made for them by fate or opportunity. At all events, there is something real and stable in their mating:

They had much in common after all. Intellectual pursuits were not everything. There were the arts, music, pictures, which they might share. Perhaps it was even better that he should have interests apart from hers, that his own particular activities were independent. It might be much better for her to be apart from his work. Who could tell?

So the pair, like myriads of others since the world began, settle into that secondary phase of marriage in which affection and compromise and the making of allowances give permanent substance to the bond that has thus far been spun chiefly of egotism and moonshine. Asenath McBride deserves a place among the Sister Carries and Jennie Cushings of American literary portraiture.

The author of "The Rise of Jennie Cushing" has done nothing so good since that book, I think, as her latest chronicle, "From Father to Son". Like its immediate predecessor "The

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Boardman Family" and so many recent American novels, it is a story of family life covering several generations—roughly, the past half-century since the Civil War. No contemporary writer short of Joseph Hergesheimer and, at his best, Booth Tarkington, has been so successful in visualizing this near past as Mrs. Watts. From the appearance of "Nathan Burke", we have had in her novels a series of records which without pretense of photographic accuracy or a literal transcript of fact have presented to our imagination the very color and atmosphere of our national life during the half-century since the Civil War. ... are scenes laid for the most part in that older midland country in which the novelist herself was bred. But we are beginning to see that it has been in that country that the American type and the American destiny have been most clearly emerging. The East sniffs and the West boosts; but the Midland is busy making.

The general situation or layout of this novel has been often employed of late; the family which has come up from shirtsleeves, and has enjoyed its brief prestige of rather ruthlessly won success, only to find itself challenged by fresh forces, industrial and social; the rise of a richer aristocracy of riches, and the upthrust from beneath of alien "comers",—fresh pioneers taking possession of the soil in the name of a fresher civilization. There are some Burkes in this story, descendants of Nathan, but they remain in the background. Our business is with the Rudds. Their solid standing goes back to a certain Rudd's Specific that cured all the ills of America in the 'forties. A quarter-century later it had become the Pancurata, with somewhat less magical powers; and by the 'eighties it had vanished discreetly from the lists of the solid and legitimate drug concern or "chemical company" now bearing the name of Rudd. Mrs. Watts links and contrasts the generations for us, in a preliminary way, by a single paragraph:

> Lawson Rudd enjoyed the distinction of being the first member of the Rudd family to be photographed; there existed daguerreotypes of all the rest—Mrs. Rudd in a plaid silk dress and black thread lace shawl, and a bonnet with bunches of flowers over each ear; David of the Specific in trousers plaided too, terrifically plaided, and a double-breasted waistcoat of crimson velvet with cut-crystal buttons, and a velvet collar to his coat, and that ministerial expression common to all our ancestors of that date whenever they posed; Hester, a meagre child in tarlatan flounces and a satin bodice, her little thin slats of arms distressingly obvious; little David and little Elihu with round collars and sleek hair. They were all stacked away in their embossed morocco cases, in a seldom-visited corner of the attic shelves; there was really no other place for the old things in the elegantly ornate or elegantly severe "period" rooms of the present Rudd house. For that matter, Lawson's own likeness taken by the new process at a time when he himself was still quite new, only served now as a means of entertainment, arousing ribald laughter rather than filial respect. Could that pudgy, solemn kid with the preposterous visored cap, and the rows of buttons all over him—could that really be dad? Pipe the laced shoes and the white stockings on him, will you? Some port!

Young Steven Rudd, son of Lawson, is the main figure in the narrative proper. He is the young prince of the house, growing up to an honorable succession. There is an uncle Eugene dimly existent, the family black sheep and outcast: otherwise all is fair on the Rudd escutcheon. Suddenly he discovers that the real blot is not Uncle Eugene but Grandfather David of the Specific. An old diary reveals that gentleman trading in bogus drugs during the Civil War, at considerable cost of human life and immense profit to himself. Eugene in his time has discovered this, and chosen to go to the dogs in his own way rather than wax sleek on the tainted Rudd money.

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Now Steven, after futile argument with his father, flings off to make a clean path for one member of the Rudd family at least. He gets a job in a New York book concern, "Fulano's". I confess to the wish that he had not almost at once become a rising young playwright "on the side"; there have been so many of them in recent fiction. However, the war comes along before we are required to believe the world is at his feet—and solves many of the problems of the Rudd family offhand. These people are very American, very much alive and a part of us; and with that curiously Thackerayan touch of hers, Mrs. Watts puts us in grateful possession of their story.

"Saul" is a study of the America of the melting-pot, of our metropolitan Jewry in particular. Here once more is the Jew of the ghetto, the sweat-shop, the "cloak and suit" trade. He does not exist in this book as a figure of comedy, a Potash or a Perlmutter; but he is present in all his other embodiments,—as the desperate animal forced to tear his way out of the ravening pack, as the exile, as the idealist. The truth is, I suppose, that the Jew is disconcerting to Gentiles largely because he exhibits in intensified contrast that clashing of major motives we all struggle with. He makes less attempt to conceal either his greed or his wistful vision of moral beauty. He seems almost unconscious of the grotesque apposition of the predatory right hand grasping what it may, and the reverent left appealing to Heaven for a blessing. In the recent "Rise of David Levinsky" by Abraham Cahan, an acknowledged spokesman of the race, the beast conquers and the dreamer dies. "Saul" paints with equal frankness the squalid side of the Yiddish character; but squalor does not win.

Saul Furinski is born in a sweat-shop. He sees his father, slaving furiously that his children may be free, die at the pitiless machine; and the boy swears to be its master. The way to do this, he soon discovers, is to use the slavery of others. He becomes a designer, then a contractor. He marries partly for the sake of the dowry that will give him a start in business. He prefers honest methods, but when the pinch comes does not let honesty stand in the way of "success". His wife is the highest type of Jewess, pure and aspiring. She cares for no success that may not be come by honestly. But Saul cannot forget the press of the pack. He tries to use her in his chicanery, and failing, drifts away from her. Another sort of love tempts him, wins him for a time. Faith Severance, the business woman of modern type, is the fitting companion of his hours of success. But then comes failure, and Faith herself sees that she can be of no use to him. "I'm the sort of woman who symbolizes a man's strength and—so long as the world is going with him—that is what he wants. But when he fails—ah, then he needs somebody else—a very different kind of woman." That woman, of course, is his wife Channah, who has courage for both—and by a quaint turn of "business romance", has skill to contrive the *coup* which sets them on their feet again. But this time, we feel sure, they will go forth together in honor to face what fortune may bring.

There are three notable pieces of creative realism among the recent English novels that I happen to have read. They are purely or primarily studies of the individual and the family. Their social range is considerable: a novel by Miss Sidgwick would

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have completed the British gamut. "The Four Roads" is the chronicle of a Sussex peasant family in wartime. The Beatups are small farmers of respectable stock; but the present head of the family has grown slack and drunken. For some years Tom, the oldest son, has kept things going. Now he is drafted, and goes to war unwillingly because he hates to leave the farm. But he takes naturally to soldiering; and the farm is rescued by his young brother Harry, a hitherto uncertain lad whose imagination is touched by the idea of helping the war through fidelity to his own patch of soil. He proves to have more initiative than Tom; and so the war creates a good servant of the land. Tom is killed, but not before we have seen the fulfilment of his honest romance. We follow also the obscure yet not insignificant courses of the two sharply contrasted daughters of the house; and, just without the family group, the figure of Mr. Sumption takes its place among the memorable tragi-comic dominies of fiction. The story has no "plot", if you mean by that an arrangement of springs and cog-wheels. But, like any creative work, whether you call it realistic or what, it is as far as possible from a chance jotting of facts. It is a complete organism, a product of imaginative selection—a "story" in the best of senses.

And this is true of "Little Houses", a "first" novel of extraordinary quality. This is "a tale of past years", and so neither helped nor harassed by those latest years from which few of our story-tellers can keep their hands. It is an intensive study of a tiny provincial world, self-contained and indifferent to what lies beyond its boundaries. Pedley Hill is literally not "on the map", but its honorable place in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle fears no eclipse by the crude glories of its pushing neighbor, Selbridge. Little houses and little people and little incidents—but how much they become our personal business, as we follow these pages! Pedley Hill, almost at sight, is as real and important to us as Arnold Bennett's Bursley, and for much the same reason. We feel it being interpreted for us in the simple act of presentation—interpreted, not lectured upon or moralized about. These small-town persons, Alldays and Binnses and Brownlees and Kingsnortons, might mean little to us as visitors at Pedley Hill, or even as fellow townsmen. How many of us see anything much in our neighbors? It is because we approach the little houses by way of the interpreter's house that these externally commonplace persons take on reality—which is to say meaning. Yet here in little are the eternal forces, the eternal contrasts. Here are ambition and jealousy and lust and love and egotism and altruism and faith and negation. Here are John Allday, who without conscious perfidy always contrives to play safe and to get on; Sam Bloom, who dreams and blunders and is naught in the eyes of respectability and success; the Kingsnortons, who are superior without effort but do not lack "troubles of their own"; poor Maggie Wheatley whose happiness evades her, and nice Elsie Benlow who happens to win hers so easily. Here, in short, is Pedley Hill for better and worse, a good little place as places go. You smile at it, but you neither laugh nor sneer. You don't altogether admire or despise any of its people; you recognize them as kin. Maggie making her sacrifice is after all doing the sensible thing as well as the generous one. John All-

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day's father and mother are narrow enough in what they want for John, but who grudges them their mellow satisfaction when he gets it? The note of the book is a fine sweet irony.

Pedley Hill remains the "hero" of the chronicle. In "The Querrils", family type rather than place type is the theme. And this is a tale of today, or of late yesterday. The Querrils are of an old British brand order, and we are to see how it reacts to the pressure of war. "Querrilism" is essentially a defensive institution: the thing is to be undemonstratively comfortable and happy within one's own circle, and to pretend that nothing of consequence exists outside. Chessilton Heath is not ignorant of the world at large, as Pedley Hill is. But its "Querril set" has learned to keep it at bay. The best basis for the everyday life in which, after all, our happiness lies, is a sort of determined affectionate gaiety. Let us agree to ignore any experience that goes deep beneath the surface; there is something unseemly in overt grief or joy. No doubt there is trouble afoot in the world at large —let us lend rather than borrow it. Worrying never got people anywhere.

Thus runs the Querril philosophy—or rather creed, for the real Querril philosophy has a curious kink in it, and quite upsets the surface quietism which is the tribal totem. This is disconcertingly and openly expressed by the oldest son, Rodney. He declares that nothing of account has ever been done for the world by letting it alone. Its only progress has been made "because people whom you despise as interferers have butted in, made themselves unpopular, and got their way". Unluckily Rodney in putting on the Querril armor discards outright the Querril common sense. His idea of settlement work appears to involve the my-good-man attitude; and in the only interview we assist at, he is observed thrusting charity on a drunken but quite capable workman in what form? Coals and blankets, by the shade of our dear Queen! Later he prefers his own judgment to that of his commanding officer, and is shot against a wall in due order. Too much interference, at last. But we come to see that some degree of interference is in reality the lot of the Querrils as of all others under the stress of war. No national or social or family unit can live to itself. Nor can it help being itself. If the book has a moral, it is a moral of race, a word for the Anglo-Saxon, British or American:

> With all his inanities, repressions, limitations, and hypocrisies, he's quite the best of the lot. He tries to play fair, and he's never satisfied. He's always grumbling and grousing. He grumbles at his successes as much as at his failures—rather more so, in fact. And at times he pays a bitter price for interference. He interferes unwisely and sometimes culpably, but still he interferes, and there's hope for a man or a woman or a state which will do that.

"The Querrils" is unmistakably a novel of the Wellsian school, a novel whose human action is more or less the deliberate expression of an "idea" which happens to top the mind of the novelist at the moment. But as a story it by no means falls short of what we may rightly have looked for from the author of "Olga Bardel".

The White Island. By Michael Wood. E. P. Dutton and Co.

The Choice. By Maurice Weyl. Mitchell Kennerley.

From Father to Son. By Mary S. Watts. The Macmillan Co.

Saul. By Corinne Lowe. The James A. McCann Co.

The Four Roads. By Sheila Kaye-Smith. George H. Doran Company.

Little Houses. By George Woden. E. P. Dutton and Co.

The Querrils. By Stacy Aumonier. The Century Co.

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LET'S BUY HER A BOOK

BY RICHARDSON WRIGHT

WHEN old Father Noah, as the Bible saith, looked on the 2.75 to excess, he seems to have had eminently justifiable reasons for doing so. In the vineyard one day Japheth began discussing what the boys would give old Mother Noah for her two-hundredth wedding anniversary.

"Let's buy her a book", said Shem.

"No, don't buy her a book", chortled Ham. "She's got one".

Whereupon Noah, in sheer disgust, sought the wine-press, with the conventional results.

But this had no effect on Japheth, for he passed the joke on to his boys, Gomer and Magog and Madai and Javan and Tubal and Meshech and Tiras, who, in turn, handed it down to their sons, Ashkenaz and Riphath (forefather of Ridpath's "Selections of the World's Best Literature") and Togarmath. Since then it has come down to us, generation after generation.

For pulling that weeze men have suffered dire punishments; they have been sawn asunder, put to the rack, faced fire and axe and murderous sword. Nero fed four perfectly good Latin scholors to the lions after they told it to him. Ivan the Terrible spiked a jocular Turk's foot to the Bloody Stairs in the Kremlin for attempting the joke. Cellini is said to have defenestrated a Venetian noble for trying to tell it. Henry VIII refused to live with Catherine of Aragon after she pulled it on him one morning before breakfast. And Mr. Trotzky-Bernstein is alleged to line up ten intelligentsia against a wall every day for daring to think that there is something funny in it.

"What'll we buy Annie for Christmas?"

"Let's buy her a book".

"No, don't buy her a book. She's got one".

Ha! Ha!

Stop your laughing. True, the joke is as old as the Catskills, but there's a world of common sense in it.

For most people one book is ample. The average man has too many books anyway. If we were confined to one book apiece for the next ten years, the servant problem, the shortage of plumbers and paper, and the abomination of incipient authors would cease. The world has gone book mad. It is taking its god from Hoe and not from Heaven. It has bowed itself down to the idol of the printed page and set a halo around the head of every pen wagger in creation.

"Let's buy her a book" has become the slogan of the civilized world—and at Christmas time you can't hear the angels sing for the clamor of those who would buy books. Once on a Christmas day men were satisfied with singing "Noel, Noel" outside your window, and were duly thankful for the rum punch you gave them because the Christ was born. Nowadays men fling books in your window and you can't even bribe them with rum punch to stop it, because rum is forbidden. Lucky Noah! You could seek forgetfulness in the cup; we are obliged to endure it.

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But if you must buy books for Christmas; if you must make the welkin ring with the new slogan, then observe, please, these simple rules.

The buying of Christmas books should start early in September, about the same time your wife and daughters begin sewing those pretties they expect to give in December. Buy the books as though you were selecting them for yourself. Buy many of them. By purchasing early you gain two advantages: (1) the bills can be pro-rated over several months—in fact, can, by exercising thrift, be paid before the end of the year; (2) you have a chance to read the books yourself.

I know of a literary man (he has since gone into advertising) who used to choose one book for Christmas gifts, go buy a stack of them on December twenty-third, and give them out indiscriminately to low and high browed alike. He had the same theory of gifts that my uncle used to have, who gave coffee-pots to all brides for three generations—and then slept with his fathers. This is an easy method, but it is rather hard on the recipient, for the simple reason that all persons do not care for the same book. By starting early and reading the books, you are in a better position to judge the desirability of giving them to the people who would most appreciate them. You also—and this is the greater advantage—may decide not to give them at all; you may prefer to keep them for your own shelves. By exercising the *intention* of giving when you bought those books, you ease your conscience of any accusation of extravagance and can better explain away the bills to your wife.

Wives, incidentally, are deadly enemies of books, even the most literarily inclined of them. They don't let you read in bed at night, they make sarcastic remarks about a man who "keeps his nose in a book", and they dread the book-buying habit, speak of it as a former generation of wives used to speak about husbands who came home intoxicated. With the ignorance of youth I used to buy books and bring them boldly home, in fact, boast about them at the dinner table. Today I have learned wisdom. It is possible for a man to buy books and still remain happily married. When I buy books I take them to my office and "sneak" them home one by one—get home early and slip them onto the shelves. Once or twice I've been caught red-handed. Then the following conversation ensued:

"What? Another book"?

"Yes, dear. I thought I could give it to Robert for Christmas".

"Oh"!

Thus family peace is restored and the world rolls on.

But let me warn you of just one pitfall in this method. Having been caught several times and having made the same reply, I secretly rejoiced over my acquisitions until Christmas week. We were doing up the parcels. "Now where's that book you are going to give Robert"? I blushed. With an eagle eye she picked it out from the shelves and opened the pages. It had my name in it and the pages were all scrawled over with notes and interlines. Believe me, I had some uncomfortable moments. I paid dearly, in fact $5.00, for the present that Robert actually received.

Of course, the fundamental rule of good taste in giving a book forbids writing the name of the recipient and giver in it. He will not then be obliged to keep it. On the other hand, should you thoroughly dislike a person, but are obliged to give him a

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Christmas present, select a book totally unsuited to his tastes, write his name and yours and the date boldly on the title-page—and send it off. Never write the name on the fly-leaf; he can cut that out. The title-page is best because he can't give the book away next Christmas without mutilating it.

The other side of the slate, receiving books for Christmas, has its own code. Just as it is a serious offense to give a man a book unsuited to his interests, so is it a serious penance to have to read such a book. I remember once smacking my lips mentally over a romance that came from an aged and religiously inclined grandmother. It had an intriguing title, and I sat down to read it with great expectations. It turned out to be a romance of the Oxford Movement—the sort of book that has a soft centre, like those widely advertised chocolates. Later I gave it to a soldier.

It is best to apply the torch to the literary misfit. This business of thinking that perhaps that volume on Albania politics, which bored you to extinction last Christmas week, will throw your stock-broking nephew into ecstasies of joy, is all wrong. Do not visit a Christmas sin unto the third and fourth generation. Calmly slide the book onto the coals, and warm your hands at its consuming heat. In many an instance a necktie is better than a book, and a pair of socks will be less offensive than the most melodious of poetry.

For, after all, giving a book is a solemn business. There is something sacramental about it which should not be wasted, nor scattered on common ground, nor given to those who revere it not. In giving a book to a friend you are permitting him to see a new world, to walk through a printed gate into a fresh garden, to buckle on the spurs of a new knighthood. But woe unto that man by whom the offense cometh. It would be criminal to give a small-town and maidenly schoolteacher a copy of "The Second Blooming" or the works of Ellen Key; one such schoolteacher was given these books, and the murder scandal to which they are attributed is still talked about in Wisconsin. It would be, in like measure, mortal sin to intrude into your uncle's remaining and peaceful days a fiery tome on Bolshevism. And those who think to enlighten the young via the purple candles of the fleshly school of literature, are only dimming a purer and nobler light.

Give a book, and you give a future. But read before you give. And then, if you appreciate books, you'll doubtless keep it for yourself.

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MEYERHOLD AND THE THEATRE THEATRICAL

BY OLIVER M. SAYLER

MEYERHOLD and Yevreynoff—these were the two names that lured me from the comparative safety of Moscow to the uncertainties of Petrograd during those anxious days of February, 1918, when the grey hordes of the Germans were swarming on unimpeded toward the capital. The stages of Moscow are the Russian theatre in microcosm—with two exceptions. The Art Theatre with its unique tradition and its unrivaled record; the Small State Theatre with its roots firmly grounded in the classic past; the Great State Theatre with its remarkable equipment of youthful genius in the ballet; the eager enthusiasm of artistic revolt under Tairoff and Balieff and Kommissarshevsky in their widely divergent institutions—these stages and the theories of the men who dominate them seem to me, after several months of intimate contact with them, to tell the whole story of the contemporary Russian theatre.

Still, there were two exceptions. No one in Moscow could deny it, no matter how partisan was his interest in his own city's playhouses. The exceptions were so exceptional that their fame had traveled before the war to far-off America, alongside that of Stanislavsky and the Art Theatre and the ballet. Meyerhold stood out in these rumors as the uncompromising foe of Stanislavsky and realism, the defender and practitioner of the theatre theatrical. Yevreynoff emerged dimly in the guise of a proponent of a new way of conceiving the theatre—monodrama. From my first consultation with Tardoff and my first visit to Stanislavsky's dressing-room, these two names were spoken with respect wherever Russian artists gathered. Under the spell of the Moscow theatres, I had lingered in the Kremlin city almost four months. But a visit to Petrograd was essential, Germans or no Germans!

Mid-February, about a week before I finally made up my mind to go to Petrograd, the Kamerny held a kind of all-night fair, attended by almost the entire futurist colony of Moscow and many of the artists and poets and players, such as David Burliuk, "the father of Russian futurism"; Aristid Lyentuloff, who paints Kremlin cathedrals standing on their ears; and Vera Holodnaya, the brunette Mary Pickford of the Russian movies. Vassily Kamyensky was there, a handsome fellow in curly golden hair and a Roman-stripe coat who has written a novel or two and several volumes of futurist verse. He is Yevreynoff's biographer, too, and from him I found that Nikolai Nikolaievitch had exchanged the black bread and the alarums of life in Petrograd for the well-fed peace of Sukhum-Kale on the Black Sea. But Meyerhold remained at his post, and besides I might trace out the trail of Yevreynoff in his absence.

My first evening in Petrograd, less than five hours after my arrival, found me at the Alexandrinsky Theatre, the state-endowed home of the drama in the capital corresponding to the Small

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State Theatre in Moscow but not so conservative in its traditions. "Revizor" or "The Inspector General", Gogol's imperishable satire, was the play; and although Meyerhold was absent, my note of introduction to him from Tairoff readily admitted me. Obviously, the theatre was having a harder struggle against the difficulties of life in the capital, for the audience was inferior in numbers and in self-possession to those of Moscow. Obviously, too, Meyerhold had nothing to do with this production of "Revizor", for it was a rather ordinary example of realistic staging dignified only by the superior humors of Uraloff, the bluff comedian who a decade and more ago had played the same rôle of the town-bailiff in Moscow as a member of the Art Theatre company. Meyerhold, it appeared, was one of several *régisseurs* at the Alexandrinsky, and to make sure of seeing his work I must seek him out in person.

Running down a busy individual in Petrograd, with everyone disconcerted by the German menace and with the necessity of establishing myself in reasonable safety in a strange and turbulent city, was a harder task than working out diplomatic relations with the Moscow theatres after the Bolshevik Revolution. At noon of the third day, I found my quarry busy with a rehearsal at the Marinsky, for he sometimes turns for variety's sake from drama to the opera. Could I come back that evening?—he would have more time; this was the note hurriedly penciled on his card. And so while the plaintive melodies of Puccini's "La Bohème" drifted into the inner rooms of the *régisseur's* loge, I sat and talked for the first time with Vsevolod Emilyevitch Meyerhold.

It is easy to see at a glance why the theatre theatrical is the artistic gospel of Meyerhold. There is nothing theatrical about the man himself—unless it be the huge, soft, white collar around his slender neck, a matter of careless comfort as much as anything. He is too intense and earnest in his belief in the theatrical to toy with it. His acceptance of realism as a dramatic method during his collaboration with Stanislavsky in the early years of the Moscow Art Theatre, was not the act of a dilettante any more than the advocacy of its opposite today. His revolt against the sterility of the Russian theatre of the nineteenth century was just as sincere as his revolt against the first means by which he hoped to correct the fault. He simply found that a certain honest cynicism in his nature refused to countenance the attempt to create illusion by the faithful and accurate representation of life.

All through the ten days that remained of my association with him, the artistic abstemiousness of the man stood out emphatically among his characteristics. His friends are not so much among those who talk about art as among those who practise it. He has particular regard for Miklashevsky, the leading Russian authority on the Italian *commedia dell' arte,* and a profound respect for Yevreynoff whose revolt against realism in the theatre has taken a different course from his own. And his constant companion in leisure as well as in work is the artist, Alexander Yakovlevitch Golovin, who has designed the scenery for almost all of his productions at the State Theatres in Petrograd during the last decade.

Once while the anxiety over the German advance was at its peak, I spent the evening at his home in a modern but modest apartment house

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out in the Sixth Rota in the southern part of the city. The front stairway was locked and barred and under guard for the night; and after satisfying the watchman I made my way upward through a rear entrance to the four or five rooms where he and Mme. Meyerhold, a practical consort, have their home. Fred Gray, a former correspondent of the London "Daily Mail" who had been decorated with the St. George's Cross for bravery at the front, was present with his Russian wife. And so was Golovin, one of the gentlest artist souls I have ever known. Spread out on a table in a small studio lined with book-shelves, were the artist's designs and the producer's plans for some future production of Stravinsky's first lyric drama, "Le Rossignol", which other European capitals had heard under Diaghileff but which Petrograd had been denied by the conservatism of the Tsar's court. Around a simple board in the living-room we sat informally over our tea and the bread with which Mme. Meyerhold honored my visit; and we talked of the hardness of life and the uncertainty of the times, but most of all of the certainty of the theatre and the persistence of art through the most bitter ordeals. I must remain, they all agreed, at least until I could see the revival of Molière's "Don Juan", with the production of which in November, 1910, Meyerhold introduced a new tradition in the State Theatres.

A dress rehearsal of "Don Juan" was scheduled for Saturday morning, March 2, preparatory to the public disclosure the following Tuesday evening. I decided to attend as a precaution against the possible necessity of flight before Tuesday. Until the actors came, Meyerhold and Golovin waited with me in the greenroom of the Alexandrinsky amid the relics and memorials of almost a century of the Russian stage—for the theatre was built from Rossi's designs in 1832 and named after the wife of Tzar Nicholas I. The more I saw of Golovin, the more I was charmed by his spirit, as beautiful and simple as the soul of a child. Meyerhold's spirit is equally fine, but he is more aggressive and he takes the lead in their collaboration. When the rehearsal finally began, he pushed it through with assurance and precision, often leaping up on the extended apron and playing a part himself as an example for the actor. In between the acts, we adjourned briefly to the refreshment room for a glass of tea and a shaving of black bread in lieu of a sandwich. When the rehearsal was over and we emerged in the Nevsky Prospekt, a score of shots rang out in the block opposite the small shops of the Gostinny Dvor where a long queue waited with mixed patience for permission to leave the city. It seemed a long way from Molière and the good-will of the artists, to the seething excitement of out-of-door Petrograd. I do not wonder which was the real Russia, the Russia which will live on into the generations ahead.

"Don Juan" in rehearsal was antic and jolly. In performance, it was sheer joy—the joy of the theatre as theatre. You face Meyerhold's stage with no illusion that it is not a stage. Of course it is a stage! Why pretend it isn't? There it is, under the full lights of the auditorium, curtain removed and apron extended twenty feet beyond the proscenium arch. It's a play you shall see, a *play*, you who love the theatre for its own sake! No cross-section of life here, no at-

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tempt to copy life! No illusion here, to be shattered by the slightest mishap or by a prosaic streak in the spectator's makeup. It's a play you shall see, and you'll know it all the time, for you'll play, too, whether you realize it or not. The audience is always an essential factor in the production of drama, but never does it enter so completely, so keenly into the psychological complex as in the theatre theatrical. The give and take between audience and actor is dynamic and almost incessant.

Into this theatre and to this stage, Meyerhold brings a play from out of an epoch which produced its drama in almost identically the same spirit of disillusioned make-believe. He writes in commenting on his production of "Don Juan":

> On the extreme west in France and Italy, Spain and England, and on the extreme east in Japan, within the limits of one epoch (the second half of the sixteenth and the whole of the seventeenth century), the theatre resounds with the tambourines of pure theatricality. . . . The academic theatre of the renaissance, unable to make use of the greatly extended forestage, removed the actor to a respectable distance from the public. . . . Molière is the first of the masters of the stage of the era of Louis XIV to bring the action forward from the back and the middle of the stage to the forestage, to the very edge of it. . . .
>
> Is it not intelligible why every incident of any scene of that brilliant theatrical epoch took place on this wonderful spot called the forestage? . . .
>
> Similar to the arena of a circus, pressed on all sides by a ring of spectators, the forestage is brought near the public, so that not one gesture, not one movement, not one glimpse of the actor should be lost in the dust of the backstage. And see how thoughtfully tactful are these gestures, movements, postures, and grimaces of the actor on the forestage. Of course! Could an actor with an inflated affectation or with insufficiently flexible bodily movements be tolerated at the proximity to the public at which the forestages of the old English, French, Spanish and Japanese theatres placed their actors?

In approaching the problem of producing a play from the old theatre, Meyerhold admits that there is no need for the exact reproduction of the architectural peculiarities of the old stages. Free composition in the spirit of the primitive stage will serve, provided the substance of the architectural peculiarities most suited to the spirit of the production is retained. What is more important, he thinks, is to determine whether the play in hand is one which can be comprehended by the contemporary spectator through the prism of his own time, or whether it will convey its idea only when the conditions and the atmosphere surrounding the original players and playhouse and audience are reproduced today. Such a play as the latter, he insists, is Molière's "Don Juan". He writes further in the critical essay on his production quoted before:

> Therefore, the *régisseur* who approaches the staging of "Don Juan" must first of all fill the stage and the hall with such an atmosphere that the action could not be understood except through the prism of that atmosphere. . . . It is necessary to remind the spectator during the whole course of the play of all the thousands of looms of the Lyonnaise factories preparing the silks for the monstrously numerous courtiers of Louis XIV; of the Gobelin hotel; of the town of painters, sculptors, jewellers and turners; of the furniture manufactured under the guidance of prominent artists; of all those masters producing mirrors and laces according to the Venetian models, stockings according to the English model, cloth according to the Dutch model, and tin and copper according to the German.
>
> Hundreds of wax candles in three chandeliers from above and in two candlesticks on the forestage; little negroes filling the stage with stupefying perfumes, dripping them from a cut-glass flask on heated platinum plates; little negroes flitting on the stage here to pick up a lace handkerchief from the hands of Don Juan or there to push the chairs before the tired actors; little negroes tying the ribbons on the shoes of Don Juan while he is having a discussion with Sganarelle; little negroes handing the actors lanterns when the stage is submerged in semidarkness; little negroes clearing away from the stage the mantles and the sabers after the desperate fight between Don Juan and the brigands; little negroes crawling un-

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der the table when the statue of the Commander comes on the stage; little negroes calling the public together by ringing a little silver bell and in the absence of the curtain announcing the intermissions—these are not tricks created for the diversion of the snobs; all this is in the name of the main object of the play: to show the gilded Versailles realm veiled with a perfumed smoke.

The more sharply Molière's temperament as a comedian stood out amid the Versailles affectation, the more we expect from the wealth, the splendor, and the beauty of costumes and accessories, although the architecture of the stage may be extremely simple.

Meyerhold's facile invention and his instinct for the elements of the dramatic are evident throughout the production of "Don Juan". In addition to solving the secret of the means wherewith to make the play live today with the same zest as at its original performance, he has devoted to every scene a mind alert for those eloquent but uncatalogued nuances and emphases by which a producer heightens the dramatic effect of a play. Such methods are particularly suitable in the theatre theatrical, for it lives and thrives on artifice contrived with skill and imagination. In Don Juan's scene with the peasant girls, for instance, Meyerhold has developed the amusing series of asides to first one girl and then the other in such a way that Juan describes a kind of fantastic geometric figure in his dual conversation. It is all highly artificial, just like Molière's language in the scene, but it is also highly amusing and even mildly exciting in its stimulus to our sense of gesture. By an equally adroit use of suspense, the arrival of the statue at the feast is built up in a combined spirit of awe and droll extravagance which leaves the spectator in that baffled mood which Meyerhold and even Molière, it would seem, deliberately sought.

I am not sure what is the final impression left by "Don Juan" at the Alexandrinsky. I do not think it is entirely the impression of Molière. Or of Louis le Grand. Certainly it is only remotely that of the Sicily which the playwright designated as its locale. Neither is there anything specifically Russian in the intellectual or emotional record left by the play. I suppose that record includes something of all these forces—filtered and fused through the creative imagination of Meyerhold, to the end that joy may be the lot of him who submits himself to its spell.

The history of Meyerhold's "Don Juan" is typical of all such productions in the Russian theatre. It was not conceived for a night or a season but for a generation. Revealed for the first time on November 22, 1910, it was played from twenty-five to thirty times during that season. Since then, it has been revived occasionally during three seasons—1911-12, 1913-14, and 1918. The opening performance of the latest revival, which I saw, was the forty-second in order from the start. They do not drive beauty to an early grave in Russia! Nor do they disarrange a work of dramatic art any more than is necessary through the exigencies of time. Of fourteen named rôles in the play, nine were played in March, 1918, by the same actors as in November, 1910.

Meyerhold's contempt for realism in the theatre and for the intimate theatre which is, perhaps, the final development of realism, is nowhere more pointedly expressed than in his attack upon the production of "The Cricket on the Hearth" at the First Studio of the Moscow Art Theatre. The criticism appeared early in 1915 in his occasional periodical of the theatre, "The Journal of Dr. Dapertutto", under the title, " 'The Cricket on the Hearth' or 'At the Keyhole' ",

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and it leads off with these lines from Gogol's play, "The Wedding":

KOTCHKARYOFF.—But what is she doing now? Why, this door must lead to her bed room. (*He goes near the door.*)

FEKLA (a woman).—You impudent fellow! You are told that she is still dressing.

KOTCHKARYOFF.—What of it! What's the difference? I shall only peep in and nothing more. (*He looks through the keyhole.*)

ZHEVAKIN.—Let me look in, too.

YAITCHNITSA.—Let me look in, too, only one little peep.

KOTCHKARYOFF (*continuing to peep in*).—Why, there is nothing to be seen, gentlemen! You can't distinguish anything. Something white is appearing, a woman or a pillow. (*All come to the door, however, and scramble to peep in.*)

"This fragment", writes Meyerhold, "contains all that I wish to say about the public which finally has found an ideal theatre for itself." And later, after a scathing indictment of the intimate theatre and its realism as a surrender to the morbid human curiosity concerning life, he writes:

We prefer the theatre with art but without a public to the theatre with a public but without art. For we know that after all had rushed to the door and tried to peep through the keyhole, Kotchkaryoff came with the news, "Sh! Somebody's coming!" and everyone jumped away from the door. To every shamelessness there is a limit.

The wealth of dramatic methods and motives which Meyerhold opposes to realism is limited only by the bounds of the most restless fancy. Rejected as a mere means of copying life, the simplest and most homely details take on new significance as they are moulded in the theatre into a new world of the imagination. From a prospectus of his studio, which aims mainly "to develop in the actors the mastery of movement in conformity with the platform where the play goes on", I take these phrases, which indicate roughly the new implications which ordinary acts and facts may be made to assume:

The meaning of the "refusal"; the value of the gesture in itself; the self-admiration of the actor in the process of acting; the technique of using two stages—the stage, and the forestage; the rôle of the outcry in the moment of strained acting; the elegant costume of the actor as a decorative ornament and not a utilitarian need; the headgear as a motive for the stage bow; little canes, lances, small rugs, lanterns, shawls, mantles, weapons, flowers, masks, noses, etc., as apparatus for the exercise of the hands; the appearance of objects on the platform and further destiny in the development of the subject dependent on these objects; large and small curtains (permanent and sliding, curtains in the sense of "sails") as the simplest method of changes; screens and transparencies as a means of theatrical expressiveness; gauzes in the hands of the servants of the forestage as a means of underlining the separate accents in the playing of the leading actors—in their movements and conversations; parade as a necessary and independent part of the theatrical appearance; various forms of parade in conformity with the character of the general composition of the play; geometrization of the design into the *mise en scène*, created even *ex improviso*; the mutual relation of the word and gesture in existing theatres and in the theatre to which the studio aspires.

Naturally, the process of reconstructing the theatre theatrical has been slow and evolutionary after the first revolutionary break with the standards of realism. Even the rediscovery of the principles which guided it in its older incarnation has been achieved by trial and experiment, and the newer principles growing out of the richer mechanical endowment and the broadened and deepened psychological horizon of our time, require even more patient testing. It would be interesting, if possible, to compare Meyerhold's original revival of "Don Juan" with its aspects today, in order to see wherein he has acquired a firmer grip on the details of a technique which is still in the making.

Meyerhold as an artist of the theatre has traveled far since as a young man he originated the rôle of Treplieff in Tchekhov's "The Sea Gull" at the Moscow Art Theatre in December, 1898; and that of Baron Tuzenbach

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in "The Three Sisters" in February, 1901. After his break with Stanislavsky and realism, and a series of independent productions in Poltava and other cities in the south of Russia, he become *régisseur* for the Theatre of Vera Kommissarshevskaya in Petrograd from the autumn of 1906 through the winter of 1907-08—one of the most notable episodes of the modern Russian stage in spite of its brief life. For her he produced a wide range of plays, including Youshkievitch's "In the City"; Pshibuishevsky's "The Endless Story"; Maeterlinck's "Sister Beatrice" and "Pelleas and Melisande"; Alexander Blok's "The Little Booth"; Hugo von Hofmannsthal's "The Marriage of Zobeida"; Ibsen's "A Doll's House"; Andreyev's "The Life of Man"; Wedekind's "The Awakening of Spring"; and Sologub's "The Triumph of Death". In the autumn of 1908, he went to the Imperial Theatres of Petrograd, the Alexandrinsky and the Marinsky, where for a decade he has been the most influential and distinguished of their staff of *régisseurs*.. His productions there have been many and varied, including Knut Hamsun's "At the Tsar's Door"; Wagner's "Tristan and Isolde"; Molière's "Don Juan"; Musorgsky's "Boris Godunoff"; Byelyaieff's "The Red Tavern"; Tolstoi's "The Living Corpse"; Gluck's "Orpheus"; Sologub's "Hostages of Life"; "Maskarad" by Lyermontoff and Glazunoff; "Elektra" by von Hofmannsthal and Strauss; Gluck's "Queen of the May"; "The Stone Guest" by Pushkin and Dargomuizhsky; Rimsky-Korsakoff's "Snyegurotchka" or "The Snow Maiden"; and Ostrovsky's "The Thunder Storm". In all these productions of his decade and a half as *régisseur*, Meyerhold has commanded the services of the leading artists of Russia for his scenic backgrounds. Many moods and many men, is the story of his collaboration. In recent seasons, he has worked almost solely with Golovin, but the list of those who preceded Golovin presents such names as Anisfeld, Bondy, Sudeykin, Kulbin, Shervashidze, Korovin, Sapunoff, Bilibin, Denisoff, and Dobuzhinsky.

In the controversy between the players and A. V. Lunatcharsky—Bolshevik *Kommissar* of Education in charge of the State Theatres—which rent the peace of those institutions in Petrograd through the winter of 1917-18, Meyerhold held aloof. He was extremely reticent in conversation concerning his political convictions, and I am not at all sure where his sympathies lie. While some of the leading artists refused to work under the new regime, Meyerhold went energetically about his tasks as *régisseur* as if there had been no change in governmental authority. If he chafed under the awkwardness of some of the new regulations, he was too shrewd to confess it. With his sensitive nature and his keen imagination, he combines a practical understanding of human affairs, and he knows that as the world runs today the artist should be happy if he is simply permitted to go ahead with his work, even if meddlesome officials of Tsar or of Soviet interpose in the matter of mechanism.

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COMPLAINT DEPARTMENT

Wanted: A New Christmas

SOME years ago the editor of one of our most prosperous periodicals suggested to his contributors that they write their Christmas stories at Christmas time, when they were surrounded by real snow and were under the immediate stimulus of Christmas-tree trimming and stocking hanging—not to mention the painful necessity of paying off the Christmas bills which loomed so darkly in the near future. He would reimburse the workmen for their Christmas wares at once and use the material the following year.

Consternation thereupon prevailed in the homes of many struggling authors who had acquired the settled habit of writing about Christmas during the hot summer months—a habit of many years standing, which this ruthless revolutionary editor thought he could break with one fell swoop of his typewriter. He should have known better. He should have understood that there is nothing more conservative than an author—many of whom, indeed, require a period of extreme heat to produce their highest inspirational Christmas output, a cool summer almost invariably being succeeded by a diminished crop of Christmas contributions. In this emergency it was suggested by one or two of the more prosperous literary brothers—who feared the ultimate effects of competition—that they might have to spend their Christmas in the tropics, in order to meet this iconoclastic demand. It was discovered, however, that the expense of making such a trip would more than eat up the money made on this perilous adventure. So the authors all stood pat, and waited as usual for the first warm days of spring to stir them to their coming task; and the editor retired to his den to hide his blushes of shame, resolving never again to trample upon the traditions of American magazinedom and attempt to put forth a new idea.

The quality of our Christmas numbers, therefore, continues to depend quite largely upon the weather; and inasmuch as last summer was not extraordinarily torrid, we must not expect too much of our Christmas numbers this year. We must look upon them with a tolerant and sympathetic eye, and if the snow-drifts in the illustrations are not so deep as we should like them, or Santa Claus has lost pep, we must not attribute this wholly to literary anæmia or to Mr. Hoover.

The authors themselves, however, are not to blame for this; their practice was predestined for them by the printing-press and post-office, which, in view of such enormous circulations, require that magazines should be printed well in advance of the day of publication. The only question that now remains is whether, in view of increased labor and other difficulties, the closing of all Christmas numbers will not have to be advanced to the beginning of summer itself—in which

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case all Christmas stories might hereafter have to be written in the spring. But let us not despair. Let us have faith to believe that the change will be so gradual that a new type of Christmas author will be evolved—one who can get his inspiration by gazing at a pussy-willow.

But authors are undoubtedly to blame for the fact that they have produced a standardized Christmas—fixed in the minds of the people as firmly as the laws of the Medes and the Persians. Since Clement Moore wrote his "Night Before Christmas" all hope was lost; an adjustable Santa Claus is no longer possible. This gentleman cannot now be changed to suit a particular requirement. His nose—in spite of the anti-saloon league—must continue to be red. His whiskers must be of the correct hirsute length. His stomach must describe the proper Yuletide curve. To make him over into a Bolshevik, to put on him a sport suit, would be to destroy him for all practical writing purposes. He is as immutable as Cupid or Uncle Sam or our youthful friend Father Time. Santa Claus must be always the same: even the Salvation Army and the department stores have not been able wholly to commercialize him. It is true that the reindeer have been largely superseded by the motor-car and the flying machine, but these after all are only accessories, like the teddy-bear and the gas-log.

So it is with father, that mildly tolerated creature who ultimately pays the Christmas freight. His function remains as it was: to strain his back with Christmas-tree setting up exercises and the heavy work of filling stockings, and to preside meekly and unostentatiously at all Christmas family dinners. But if we descend to the more or less abstract,—and with such a large audience, all reversion to the abstract must be regarded as a descent,—we shall discover that the old Christmas entities remain intact. Christmas eve would not be quite regular unless it was accompanied by falling snowflakes to slow music, and stood ready at any moment to welcome the bearded stranger who, formerly the black sheep of the family, now returns with money enough made out of the war to raise the mortgage. The visit of the relative has suffered no material change, and the Christmas gift that is just what one has always wanted is still doing business at the old stand.

In these painful circumstances, what is to be done with Christmas? The great need is to reorganize it, to put it on a better paying basis. The high cost of living makes this necessary. Authors still continue to think they should live, in spite of the fact that editorial writers believe that literature would not suffer materially if they did not. Owing to the fact that at Christmas time there is a large expansion of sentiment, Christmas numbers are the most popular of the year, and carry unusual amounts of advertising. The horrible suggestion has been made that, as the advertising itself is much more interesting than the contributions, the contributions should be abolished altogether, thus raising the literary standard of all periodicals. The author, of course, is not to be considered, any more than if he were an employee of the post-office department or a member of the cabinet. He would be forced to write the advertisements, or to make a try at it, and the shock of getting any new ideas would render him entirely unfit for his regular work during the

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rest of the year. There is, however, no possibility of this suggestion being carried out, for the reason that it would benefit the public too much; and nothing that is likely to benefit the public just at present has the ghost of a show.

Several ingenious authors some time ago thought they had solved the problem. They admitted that there was nothing ever new about Christmas and its ideas and characters, and never could be anything new about it, any more than there is about theology or jokes; but it occurred to them that they could take almost any story they wrote and make it over into a Christmas story by injecting into it a stock Christmas idea. This is so simple that it would seem almost a shame for the author to take the money. Let us, for example, assume for the moment that Shakespeare is one of the regular contributors to "The Ladies' Home Journal". Spring and the pussy-willows have arrived. Mr. Davis wishes to obtain from Mr. Shakespeare a light Christmas play—something that has about it a domestic flavor, and yet is not above the heads of the munition workers who are now inhabiting upper Fifth Avenue. Shakespeare—unfortunately—has nothing on hand but "Troilus and Cressida", which "Snappy Stories" is favorably considering, if a bedroom fight can be slipped in at the end; "The Merchant of Venice" which (on the promise of its being lengthened to run four or five miles into the advertising pages) "The Saturday Evening Post" has agreed to accept; and "Macbeth", which the Shuberts have declined because there is not enough kick in it. Shakespeare, who is nothing if not up-to-date, then conceives the happy idea of making the banquet scene into a Christmas celebration. As thus:

Scene IV

A Christmas banquet prepared. Brightly trimmed tree in distance, and on table centre-piece of holly and mistletoe. Enter Macbeth, Ross, Lennox, lords and attendants.

MACB.—Merry Christmas everybody; sit down at first
And eat a hearty meal. . . .

In like measure, any story in which the scene opened, say on or about April fifth with the first faint warmth of spring in the air, and the inconstant rain descending, could be changed to December twenty-third with the crackle of the snow under foot and the crisp ozone mantling one's cheeks.

This seemed like a perfectly good vein; but alas! our authors had not reckoned upon the public, which, up to the present writing, still has the privilege of staying away from what it doesn't want to see. If the authors had gone to the moving-picture men for advice, those gentlemen would have imparted to them a fatal truth learned some time ago—that you can't fool all of the people, even at Christmas time. For the moving-picture people discovered that the public demanded a certain amount of essential reality: that if two men were in a fight, it would not do for them merely to appear to fight, but that they really must fight: that when a man jumped from one roof to another he really must jump. And if certain things were not possible, they were to be frankly announced as such. Thus, when they couldn't make Jerusalem in a film, the moving-picture men made it plain: "This is not Jerusalem; this is only the suburbs of Los Angeles." Not in so many words perhaps, but nevertheless with sufficient verity. And in order to make it doubly evident that they could not obtain genuine gentlemen to act for them, the

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moving-picture people invariably had the alleged gentlemen come into all drawing-rooms with their hats on. In other words the moving-picture men said: "We may be able to sandbag the author when we make a contract with him, but not the audience. We must be sincere."

Thus it was gradually discovered that a Christmas story had to have a genuine Christmas motive back of it, and as there was no chance among the authors of re-creating Christmas and its motives, they found themselves just where they were in the beginning.

It may be argued—as anything else may be argued—that the authors are losing time; and that just because a thing is old and permanent, is all the more reason why it can continue to be done over again. And there appears to be truth in this. Sex is old, and I am told by the authorities that sex continues to be written about, strange as this may seem to simple-minded people who continue to wonder why we like to read Arnold Bennett, when the story of Adam and Eve is told in about six hundred words. And there are other successful authors who continue to write about sex. Mr. Beresford writes about it. Mr. Galsworthy writes about it. Mr. Wells writes about it, when he can take a day or so off from writing about the Almighty. And I am told that Mr. Hughes, Mr. Chambers and Harold Bell Wright even refer to it occasionally.

The difference between sex and Christmas, however, is the difference between human nature and economics. Human nature is more or less unalterable, except as it may be changed from time to time by Mr. Wilson or Mr. Trotsky. In spite of everything being written about it, people continue to fall in love even if, on account of the price of food, they agree to postpone the wedding day. But Christmas—based upon the kindliest of motives, generosity—has come to have attached to it a set of properties. It is not too much to say that we are bored by useless gifts, by the Yuletide profiteer, by the wife's box of cigars, by the homecoming of the prodigal son, by the lonesome hero in the great city, by the boarding-house escapade, or by the celibate millionaire's Christmas meal in the lonely chop-house. To put Christmas on its feet and give it a new start in life, ought to be the business of all editors and authors. This is a matter for the American Federation of Labor to take up, and Mr. Gompers, who is the only man thus far who has had even a temporary success in revising the law of supply and demand, appears to be the only one who is safe to do the job.

Mr. Gompers, assisted by the Authors' League and what walking delegates he can spare from Washington, should immediately draw up a new Christmas for the benefit of long-suffering authors, and notify the American people that hereafter they must read only those Christmas stories which are written according to the new rules laid down by him and his associates.

By next summer we ought to be running on the new schedule.

In the meantime, let us be merrier this Christmas in the old way than we would be if we knew that next year we should still have to read the same old Christmas things we have been reading before high-minded gentlemen like Mr. Gompers were presented by kind Providence with the power to make over the human race on reasonable notice, and according to scale.

—THOMAS L. MASSON

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In the Treatment of Poets

THE person on whose account she wrote to me had informed me that she was the loveliest and most intelligent of old ladies. It was, indeed, a very charming letter. But in the midst of its spider-webbed graces I found that she was saying:

"Yet am I too Romantic for even you, the Poet?"

She wasn't too romantic to be very delightful indeed. My profession enabled me to visualize her with pleasure; lace-capped, distinguished, tremulously charming. But her premise—granting her the intelligence—was wrong. "Even" was a bad mistake. A poet is the last person in the world for anyone to be romantic before.

He is a professional, to begin with, and you are an amateur. While you are trying to live up to him in more picturesque phrases than you would ordinarily dare, in re the sunset or the white-slave traffic or whatever may be the poetic theme of the hour, he is, under his courteous smile, very much annoyed with you for using the wrong word here, or blundering into an anticlimax there. Also he hates to be lived up to. It's out of hours, and he, like Grosvenor, likes occasional half-holidays for rest and refreshment. For even in this wonderful age, when classes in poem-making infest New York City, and are given by correspondence schools; when shoals of earnest aliens with rule-books take notes once a week on how to construct the Poem of Introspection, the Poem of Passion, and the Poem of Refinement, a professional poetry-writer is regarded a little shyly by non-professionals. People are embarrassed by one who has mentioned his presumably personal feelings in the July number. They look at him or her, hilariously having afternoon tea, and marvel at the stern fortitude which can hide such feelings as those which were worth seventy-five cents a line at the bottom of the travel article. And they feel that it is not quite a proper reticence—which, indeed, it is not. A young friend of mine who commenced life as a well-known minor poet stopped disgustedly the second year out.

"Poetry", he said, "is mental lingerie, and should not be displayed in public."

His resolve was blessed unto him, for he is now getting top prices in all the worst magazines for stories in which the characters murder each other in a slow and picturesque fashion, making speeches as they do so. I have always suspected those speeches as being the last relic of his former trade, but at least, placed as they are, they do no harm. The public does not analyze them to discover their Real Object, as they used to the poems his devoted wife harried him into making when the coal-bills pressed. And so he does not feel self-conscious at being analyzed.

For it is a mistake to think that your poet does not know when he is watched and wondered at. Professional thrill-hound that he is, he sees much more of his friends' feelings than are visible to the naked eye, and is slightly ruffled at vivisection, being sensitive. His only salvation under the microscope, indeed, is the aforesaid fact of his not being a romantic person.

The poet is, as a matter of fact, a heartless brute who, on finding an artless young emotion running about loose in his ego, promptly catches it, ties it up in as natural and unconscious an attitude as possible, and

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photographs it in several positions. As for the emotion, after it is released —cut down, so to speak—it may do what it pleases. The poet's interest in it is over. He does not cherish it, as do laymen. Sometimes, if it is a husky young emotion of unusual vitality, it goes on living. But more often all that's left is the set of photographs.

These are very lifelike, and people write in from ever so many places to inquire about how he knew about them and their feelings toward Eloise. By that time he usually has a new emotion lashed to the model-stand and can't remember.

For this reason his life is emotionally much less wearing than that of the ordinary mortal who has "only written a little—and never really tried to publish—not hard, you know". The ordinary mortal, aside from the few times before mentioned, has, let us suppose, an emotion. He is genuinely moved by a stretch of landscape, a noble deed, or a person he has fallen in love with. But he can't do anything overt about it. He says "Gee!" probably; is a bit proud of himself and a bit embarrassed; and then he has to go down town and attend to his law practice or his hay-and-feed store, and so he rams down the feeling inside of him, where it feels sort of lumpy and uncomfortable.

Let us consider the poet, faced by the same emotion. Being a hardened wretch of no modesty—the profession, as I have explained, makes for indecency of soul—he is neither embarrassed nor proud. He is on old ground. He lets the emotion surge till the exact moment when it is at high-water mark. Then he pulls out his fountain-pen; and his only subsequent feeling is the one common to all hunters of big game. He is on the trail. It is a rapture, but not the rapture and regret of unself-conscious feeling. And after all is over, there is no lumpy feeling in his consciousness. The emotion has been written out.

This is why the women who write tragic love poems have the unfeigned gaiety of young girls, at thirty-eight; and why male poets in their forties look, except for their black-rimmed glasses, like lads. They have no burdens of unexpressed sorrow or romance weighing them down.

They have burdens, of course. The principal one is the fatal tendency of all who know them to forbid them time off from their profession. I refer to the habit, far too widely spread among the general public, of leading a poet who is through for the day, out to what are known as poetical scenes. It is a mistake. For one thing, he has probably been there and back again, like the little pig in the nursery tale, before you have got around to leading him thither. Also he has had such long and enforced practice in his unknown youth—before he had pieces in the magazines—at pretending to be like practical folks, that unless he is very clever he will have difficulty in obliging you with the sort of remarks expected from one of his trade.

I remember one poet, a kind, obliging soul, who acted as poetically as he could whenever he remembered to. He even wore a flowing tie. The tie stimulated his audiences, he was wont to say; and it didn't annoy him, as it was too close to his chin for him to see much of it, and he didn't look in the glass, anyway, except when shaving, before it was on.

Well, some friends and admirers owned a house with a View. There were hills, and a sunset to be seen at the proper time of day in a cleft be-

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tween them, and even, if I remember his tale aright, a glassy lake with swans. So they invited that poet for a week-end. They never told him about the View, which was a late purchase. They imagined, I fancy, that he would be more fluent about it if it burst on him unannounced.

He, poor soul, thought they had asked him over because they liked him personally, not at all because he made a precarious living writing poetry. So he had a very pleasant time, especially enjoying, he said afterward, the bath-towels. He had a harmless passion for those ample bath-towels which much resemble hirsute counterpanes, and which are met with only in the houses of the rich and great.

But after dinner his hosts, like the walrus, decided that the Time had Come. They pried him from the opulent armchair where he was smoking, very content with his cigar and quite unconscious of his doom. They led him out on the lawn, whence the View was best seen. They grouped themselves in expectant attitudes, ready for his outburst.

"Look!" said the spokesman in hushed tones.

The poet looked, politely. He looked very carefully, even putting up his black-rimmed eyeglasses, while the household held their breaths, except such as panted audibly.

"Oh!" he said. "Why, that—now, that certainly *is* a nice view!"

He did not mean to hurt them. He said afterward that if they'd only given him time he was sure he could have made up something.

"But they sprang it on me so darn quick!" he was wont to say plaintively, "and I'd had such a good dinner. It really wasn't my fault. . . . All the same, I'm glad they never asked me again—people like that are too wearing. But they *did* have wonderful bath-towels," he would add with a wistful note in his voice.

When you come to regard it impartially, there is something cruelly unsportsmanlike in this attitude of the general public. It seems to feel that a poet, alone of all mankind, is entitled to no time off. Why, no one knows. No lawyer is expected to go into raptures at being led up to promising subjects for divorce cases after he has left his office; the proprietor of the hay-and-feed store is not herded out to meadows of blowing grass and bidden to admire it as prospective fodder, by those who wish to amuse him. Financiers are not asked how it feels—though one wants to—to have so much money. Only the poor poet, bounding from his poem-room, yearning to forget all but the simplest words, is sternly dragged back to his shop by all who know him, and forced to perform. If he tells people that it is after hours, he is regarded as one who is being inexcusably flippant at the expense of that respectable lady, the Muse.

He is not trying to be flippant or funny. He tries not to, as a rule, wishing to please. It is not expected. But he can always lay the comfort to his soul that there *is* a humorous side to things, and that he has a firm grip on it. For most poets have senses of humor, even if they display them only (the wise hide them deeply) among their own kind. And hidden or rashly displayed, it is the best gift of the gods to that strange creature—half-child, half wise man—the poet.

If he couldn't see the joke of it all, he would never survive the world's taking his profession the way it does.

—MARGARET WIDDEMER SCHAUFFLER

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A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

THREE ROOSEVELT BOOKS

By Maurice Francis Egan

OF these three books William Roscoe Thayer's is the saddest and the most important. Mr. Thayer is an historian who, like Lord Acton,—an intense lover of liberty, too,—has *les défauts de ses qualités*, as well as his prejudices, and there are some points in his volume which might bear argument before one either accepts or refuses to accept them. It would not, however, do, in a review that claims to be just,—and short,—to make criticisms that might after all prove unfounded. It is a sad book because it shows to what depth of political servitude our country had fallen before Theodore Roosevelt awoke the honest men of the country to a sense of their degradation. Speaking of the new laws which Theodore Roosevelt put on the statute book, Mr. Thayer gives a list and says:

> Although the list is by no means complete, it shows that Roosevelt's receptive and sleepless mind fastened on the full circle of questions which interested American life, so far as that is controlled or directed by national legislation. . . . And yet it is evident to all Americans now, as it was to some Americans at the time, that that legislation had to be passed; because if the monopolists had been allowed to go on unrestrained, they would have perverted this republic into an open plutocracy in which individual liberty and equality before the law would have disappeared; or they would have hurried on the social revolution, the Armageddon of Labor and Capital, the merciless conflict of class with class, which many persons already vaguely dreaded, or thought they saw looming like an ominous cloud on the horizon. It seems astounding that any one should have questioned the necessity of setting up regulations. And will not posterity wonder, when it learns that only in the first decade of the twentieth century did we provide laws against the cruel and killing labor of little children, and against impure foods and drugs?

That American self-complacency could have gone so far as to accept, with almost cynical tolerance, abuses which were the beginning of a reign of privilege as tyrannical as that which the French in 1782 destroyed, seems almost impossible, as we look back. We who lived through it, would willingly forget it; but Mr. Thayer, with the impartiality of a historian who is not so bent on deifying the character of Theodore Roosevelt as on showing his background, has in describing the circumstances which made him great, dissected a horrible social condition with a skill and directness which makes one fear that if Theodore Roosevelt had not saved us by his foresight and energy, his relentless patriotism, and his utter fearlessness, the present conflict between capital and labor might have assumed more hideous proportions; for the reason that the grand dukes and the barons of industrialism would have become as regardless of the rights of the people as were the farmer generals, like Tulon, who is said to have advised the French people to eat grass, if they could not get bread!

He was one of the earliest of the Monopolists to be swung to the "lanternes" in Paris,—with grass in his mouth. It is very difficult to imagine now the attitude of our Pennsylvania dukes and barons; it was made very painfully evident during the famous coal strike, when Roosevelt, outraged by their callousness and their belief that their property and their earnings

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belonged to them absolutely, — that they had no duty to the public, and that any attempt to interfere with their vested interests was treason against the ruling class, — clipped their power.

Theodore Roosevelt believed with Abraham Lincoln that capital has its rights which must be protected, but that labor is prior to, and independent of capital, and that capital could never have existed but for labor. He held, too, that property is a positive good in the world, but it is the fruit of labor; and he was imperative in the belief that if labor attempted to pull down the house of capital because labor was houseless, instead of building his own domicile, labor itself would later perish by violence. Roosevelt's point of view as to the rights of capital and labor was founded on a carefully-thought-out ethical conception of life; those of us who saw him during the White House conferences on the coal strike,—when he said "he awoke in the morning sick at heart to know that part of his countrymen and their children were starving", as he put it, "for heat",—saw that in his conception of what he owed, as president, his heart and his head worked so completely that justice and mercy walked together.

Mr. Thayer's analysis of the political obstacles against which Theodore Roosevelt fought is pitiless;—I think we older men would have preferred to forget the conditions of corruption which existed until this new star arose, and to have left the future historian, whose vistas might be softened by the veil of distance, to depict them for the generations to come. Nevertheless, every young man should read this book, and keep it for reference; it is bitter,—but it is a tonic and also a preventative.

On page 370 Mr. Thayer characterizes Mr. Root's ruling at the convention which nominated Mr. Taft as a "grave error". This was the ruling when the Roosevelt delegates from Massachusetts refused to vote, and the chairman insisted that the alternate of the delegates should represent them. It must be remembered that Mr. Root had a perfect right to assume that delegates are instructed; and the fact that these delegates refused to vote because they favored Roosevelt, but were not prepared to quit the Republican Party, was no reason why they should have been permitted to remain silent, unless they asserted that they had been instructed to such a compromise.

Mr. Thayer's book is not, like so many writings on Theodore Roosevelt, a mere *mémoire pour servir à l'histoire.* It is a history itself.

Lawrence Abbott's "Impressions of Theodore Roosevelt" very well supplements the serious analysis by Mr. Thayer. Mr. Abbott has no opinion as to whether Mr. Roosevelt was mistaken or not when, after his return from Europe, he rushed into politics. Mr. Thayer has a very distinct opinion, and it is shared by many of Mr. Roosevelt's best friends. Mr. Abbott does not accentuate the spirit of prophecy which Mr. Roosevelt showed when he denounced the Laborites, who then, as today, assumed that they represented a privileged aristocracy absolved from the obligations and even from the laws which bind the rest of the community; but he gives the full flavor of several of the many delightful aspects of Mr. Roosevelt's character. Mr. Abbott offers a more convincing account of the ex-President's clash with Cardinal Merry del Val. On page 219 Mr. Abbott says, in speaking of the visit of the Nuncio at

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Vienna, in full official robes, to Mr. Roosevelt on his arrival at that city:

> This exchange of courtesies created considerable discussion and comment in the newspapers. . . . The Vatican seemed to approve, and those who knew the inside of church politics said it was the method which the Pope took to indicate that he did not wholly approve of Merry del Val's management of the affair.

It had been a series of diplomatic blunderings from beginning to end, during which Cardinal Merry del Val had the pleasure of showing that he was not especially in love with the republican form of government. Very spontaneously, with a modesty which adds to the charm of the book, Mr. Abbott gives us an attractive series of sketches. The very fact that he felt himself rather unsophisticated in the midst of European artificiality adds a special charm to his work; and it is full of pleasant chuckles. Probably no man better fitted to conduct Mr. Roosevelt's tour could have been found than Mr. Abbott; he had no taint of snobbishness; a king or a prince was a human being to him, and everybody he met in Europe had a sense of pleasure in making his path as smooth as possible. This is evident in fresh and vivid pictures of the life of European courts seen from an entirely new angle.

The last chapter is one of the sweetest and simplest pieces of writing—full of understanding—that has ever come from the pen of any man about a friend.

"Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children" is a good Christmas book and bears out Mr. Roosevelt's opinion that "for unflagging interest and enjoyment, a house full of children, if things go reasonably well, certainly makes all other forms of success and achievement lose their importance by comparison".

Here are graphic expressions of that tender sympathy and sense of humor which were never-failing qualities of his; there is one anecdote which he was fond of telling, but which is not contained in any of the amusing, kindly, cheerful, fatherly, and friendly letters in this book. One of the children, —perhaps Archie,—was ill and refused to eat. At last his old Irish nurse approached him with a piece of beefsteak which he had hitherto refused. "Do, my dear, take a little piece of the tenderline." The adventurous child, deceived by her pronunciation and fancying that he was really eating part of a tender "lion", succumbed to her blandishments;—but on nearly every page there's a better story than this. And where have the glories of June and May in the gardens behind the White House, redolent of jasmine and honeysuckle, been ever before so described? But the gem of all the letters is, I think, the picture of "The Pig Named Maude!"

Theodore Roosevelt, An Intimate Biography. By William Roscoe Thayer. *Houghton Mifflin Co.*

Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children. By Joseph Bucklin Bishop. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Impressions of Theodore Roosevelt. By Lawrence F. Abbott. Doubleday, Page and Co.

A LITERARY PILGRIMAGE

By Frederic Taber Cooper

IN the opening pages of "Fair Margaret", Marion Crawford's only novel with a distinctly Paris setting, the author developed the theory that the great cities all have faces, which he conceived as representing the composite face of all the inhabitants. "What should we get", he wondered, "if we could blend into one picture all the English descriptions left us by Thackeray, Sala, Du Maurier?"

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Obviously Arthur Bartlett Maurice could not have drawn from Crawford his inspiration for the volume before us, since he rashly committed himself to the assertion that if the latter wrote any book "in which the characters linger more than a brief moment in Paris, it has escaped the present Pilgrim's memory". That "Fair Margaret" was overlooked is not surprising, since the conception of Paris as "gay, incredulous, frivolous, pretty, and impudent" is probably the least successful of its author's many physiognomies of cities. Nevertheless, "The Paris of the Novelists" is substantially the sort of composite picture foreshadowed in Crawford's suggestion.

Readers who have had occasion to be grateful to Mr. Maurice for the ample inclusiveness and accuracy of his earlier volume, "The New York of the Novelists", may perhaps be unreasonably disappointed in its successor, which differs radically both in scope and spirit. "The Paris of the Novelists" is no prearranged, methodical round-trip obedient to mileage and time-table; on the contrary, it is written in a vein of enviable vagabondage, and records the treasured memories of pilgrimages to chosen bookland shrines. An unwritten law of all Sentimental Journeys is that they shall not live up too closely to their titles. Sterne, we remember, felt himself under no obligation to fulfil his promise to carry us "through France and Italy". With similar inconsequence Mr. Maurice finds the limits of his Paris elastic enough to include all Normandy, Provence, and the Mediterranean waters clear to the Algerian coast,—and where is the ingrate who would dare protest when these excursions follow the fascinating trail left by Flaubert's "Madame Bovary" in Rouen, and Daudet's "Tartarin of Tarascon"?

Aside from any question of personal preference, Mr. Maurice could scarcely have applied his New York formula to Paris, since to cover that new field with similar thoroughness would easily have required half a dozen bulky volumes. The novelists of Paris begin with the days of Rabelais, and every brick and cobblestone in the city has its own special ghosts of fiction. No veteran reader of novels can fail to recall offhand several stories of no greater relative worth than Gunter's "That Frenchman", which so strongly appeals to Mr. Maurice. The present reviewer recalls an early enthusiasm for Ainsworth's "Crichton", Halévy's "Criquette", and Gyp's "Autour du Mariage", to mention only three at haphazard. Where was the tower from which Crichton slid single-handed down a rope? Where was the theatre where little Criquette first sold *brioche?* And along what trail did the indomitable Paulette lead her hapless husband through the fantastic dance of matrimony? Don't seek for answers in Mr. Maurice's pages, for you will seek in vain.

And herein lies the secret of the very genuine and kaleidoscopic charm of this distinctly intimate and personal volume. In literature, perhaps rather more than in other fields, the first requisite for passing on the contagion of an enthusiasm is first to feel that enthusiasm yourself rather keenly. That is why the best chapters and paragraphs in this book are so conspicuously better than some of the others. One surmises, for instance, that Victor Hugo does not stand high among our author's enthusiasms; for the six-page chronicle of the Hugo family's migrations from the Rue de Clichy to the Impasse des

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Feuillantines, and thence successively to the Rue du Cherche-Midi, the Rue des Vieux-Augustins, etc., is as uninspired as Homer's catalogue of ships. But turn to the sections devoted to Balzac or Dumas or Thackeray and his "Ballad of the Bouillabaisse", and you receive the sensation of contact with a mental live-wire—assuming, of course, that you individually possess the responsiveness needed to complete the circuit.

And for this reason the conscientious reviewer should close with a friendly word of warning. Unless you are one of those unfortunates whose sluggish blood has never leaped responsive to the thrill of true romance, this book is likely to play havoc with your well-ordered plans. Have you formal engagements for this evening? Were you leaving town for a week-end in the country? You may as well take down the telephone now and break the news that you cannot come. For you have just realized that it is—bless your soul!—five years since you have taken "Père Goriot", or "Monte Cristo", or "Henry Esmond" from the shelf,—five years, to your own big loss, since you have galloped breathless with Athos, Porthos, Aramis, and D'Artagnan on the road to London to save the fragile honor of a queen, or shivered beneath a scaffold under the crimson rain of a martyred king's blood! The great wizards of romance are few and far between; and Mr. Maurice has done a worthy service in reminding us that Paris, more than any other city, has enjoyed a monopoly of them. He has given us a book indispensable to those who would know their literary Paris well,—and those who already know it, will want the book doubly as a reminder.

The Paris of the Novelists. By Arthur Bartlett Maurice. Doubleday, Page and Co.

MURRAY MARKS AND HIS FRIENDS

By Benjamin De Casseres

IT is a vanity and a pleasure to confess one's ignorance. In books, it is the vestibule to an adventure. There are so many men, famous and nearly famous, whom I have never heard about, that my life is like a serial in the old "Golden Days", where one met the "To Be Continued" line at the end of every breath-gulping story. It would be a good idea to open the biographical dictionary at any page once a week, and pick out some name that you had never heard of, and find out all about the man or woman named. These new diversions in other people's psyches might lay the groundwork of a new indoor sport.

When the editor of THE BOOKMAN took off the shelves a big book bound in sky-blue boards with a golden medallion, in the centre, of a man whose profile reminded me of James A. Garfield—and asked me whether I had ever heard of Murray Marks, I had to confess with a flushed face that I had not. And when instead of the expected reply of "What! You never heard of Murray Marks!", I received the quiet observation, "Well, neither have I", I felt that I had met something more remarkable than Murray Marks—and that was an honest-speaking magazine editor. Two titillations in one afternoon! There was a Murray Marks, I recalled, who had been third baseman on the old Philadelphia Athletics, but he did not have whiskers.

This is the great Murray Marks, and G. C. Williamson has written a book about him and his friends. Murray Marks's friends we have all heard about. They were Whistler, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Sir Edward Burne-

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Jones, A. F. Sandys, Simeon Solomon, Millais, Swinburne, Ruskin, Charles Dickens, Cruikshank, and thousands of others of that period. Dr. Williamson has written a fascinating book about the most curious and diverse collection of geniuses that were ever associated one with another in English literary and art history. Unfortunately, there never was a Remy de Gourmont to do a "Book of Masques" about these great men. There have been tons of miscellaneous appreciations and "lives", brochures, and reviews, but nothing that stands out as a panorama of that age. Dr. Williamson is a good reporter, but hardly a great literary artist.

Murray Marks himself is worth the chapter given to him. He was a business man—a merchant, a man who bought and sold things. But he made of "business" a supreme art. He was a merchant de luxe, a dealer in eternals, a vender of magical, incarnate dreams, a man who haggled with Goethe's "Helena". His "business card"—"Murray Marks, 395 Oxford St. W."—is reproduced in the book. This trade card was designed by Rossetti, Whistler, and William Morris. It is executed on a dull gold background, and represents a ginger-jar of Chinese porcelain, — decorated with prunus blossom, and standing upon a shelf covered with a maroon-colored material—having its lid by its side. In the jar is a peacock's feather, and by the side of the jar another feather of the same kind; while around the edge of the card are engraved the words referring to the various things about which Marks was becoming a well-known expert—furniture, bronze, leather, tapestry, armor, carving, enamels, and porcelains. When the gods collaborate in business cards for an art dealer, there must be more in the soul of the dealer than was ever dreamed of in the philosophy of Fifth Avenue. And there was.

Marks was a Jew of Dutch and German extraction. When he was a boy he fell in love with blue vases and *sang-de-bœuf* sprinklers, beakers, and urns which John Keats alone could immortalize. The boy became an expert in beautiful things, and his studio was the meeting-place of those famous artists, poets, and writers whose productions were the final and only religion of Murray Marks.

He found in Spinoza and Schopenhauer his "escape". While on a trip to Germany he came upon the "Ethics" of the great ex-communicated Jew of Amsterdam. He not only studied the great Baruch, but he lived according to the dictates of the Spinozistic formulas. He looked on the emotions as a nuisance in the life of the æsthete-dilettante. He did not go as far as his master in saying "Get thee behind me, Eve!", for he married a charming, intellectual woman whose portrait Rossetti did in 1868, and which is reproduced in this book; but he burned with that "hard and gem-like flame" which Pater and Nietzsche after Spinoza held to be the real afflatus of the æsthetic life.

The event of his life was his meeting with Arthur Schopenhauer. He carried on a correspondence with the mighty iconoclast of Frankfort until the latter's death, in 1860. Marks was one of the few men always *persona grata* in the house of the Pontiff of Pessimism. It is curious the influence this surly superman, who flung his Everlasting Nay point blank in the face of the "progressive" nineteenth century, exercised over Marks, the man of the world, the generous, social being, the smiling and unruffled patron of genius, whose life was an

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Everlasting Yea. He took from Schopenhauer what he needed, and left the old hermit his ill-nature. It was Schopenhauer's Absolute that appealed to Marks, and the philosopher found in the English Jew his ideal—a contemplative mind freed from the servitude of the "Will".

One of the curious men who frequented the studio of Marks was Simeon Solomon. A chapter is given over to the life of this unfortunate poet and painter. Both he and his remarkable sister Rebecca "went the pace". Rebecca was a painter of some ability and exhibited about forty works at the Royal Academy. High-spirited, with the soul of a gipsy, she preferred Omar Khayyam to Spinoza, lived her life to the lees of the cup, and had, no doubt, engraved over her tomb, N'importe!

Marks and his friends were frequently engaged in the task of fishing Simeon out of jail, the gutter, or the slums. This rare being, who was the close friend of Pater, who had been hailed by Swinburne and Lord Houghton, was found unconscious near Holborn after a spree and died in an infirmary. He loved thieves, sold matches like Francis Thompson in the streets of London, and preached the Talmud while he was drunk. He lies with Verlaine and Poe and Thompson. Some day, as Dr. Williamson says, his tragedy will get between covers, with his pictures, his poems, and his prose. Irony—thy name is genius!

The world never tires of reading about this famous group of men, who kept London in an uproar and made night hideous—with Swinburne's barrage of oaths directed at "cabbies" mostly. Over them all presides the calm mind of Spinoza-Marks, contemplative hedonist and a "regular feller".

Murray Marks and His Friends. By G. C. Williamson. John Lane Co.

LIFE AND TIMES OF GRANT OVERTON

By Harry Esty Dounce

HOW to go about reviewing any book by Grant M. Overton on authors, would be more than I should know. I could never do it sympathetically, because I like so few of his ideas on this subject; neither could I do it unsympathetically, since he is a man whose friendship makes that impossible; and to review anything neutrally is a crime.

Grant M. thinks there must be something big and vital and momentous in an author of the Christian name of Harold, because Harold keeps making millions of readers feel deeply. Grant M. holds (like a pup to a root!) that a well-known woman novelist with a touch of nature-study needn't mind what critics write, because she has thousands of testimonials from people whose whole lives have been altered upon their taking the very first bottle of her works. Grant will even champion Pollyanna—without the hint of a blush on his large, pallid, intently earnest countenance.

Knowing that he could have no base motive, I used to assume he was joshing with method in it—trying to make people jump, and to get them reading his Sunday book section. I have since sadly concluded that he does believe these things. He has filled a whole box car with hobbies, and when he trots one out and mounts it (the latest is the contention that an author must auth to make money or else go wrong and fail), he cannot produce a paragraph which doesn't delight me with its spontaneous Overtonian cleverness—and outrage me into a dignity past all exasperation. For it sagely propounds that black is white, or else that white is white. He likes trying his

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hand at the paradox game, and has a pretty flair for it, the trouble being that his paradoxes either invert the fractions and leave them topsy-turvy, thus doing a halfway job, or simply cancel out to zero.

All of which means that I rarely agree with Grant M. and his book, "Why Authors Go Wrong". Perhaps the safest plan will be to review Grant M. himself.

A newspaper commonly devotes a good deal of space to the new books. As a rule, they are lumped off and dealt with once a week. The usual thing, even on the important and prosperous daily papers of great cities, is to hire a frustrated old gentleman with a college education, and require him, single-handed, to read perhaps two thousand books a year, and to discuss all that seem to him to merit it. The result is dead wood—dead wood-pulp if you like—interesting to nobody but the advertising publishers, and of only a perfunctory interest even there.

The "Sun", New York, was in better case than most. It enjoyed a tradition of genuine authority in literary matters. Within the last two years, the powers on the "Sun" decided to make even more of that asset, and they cast about for a staff man to create a Sunday book supplement that should be a thing of life.

Their choice must have been inspired. His office associates knew that Grant M. had great capacity for work and much original ability; without the latter, he would not have been "writing brevier" for the "Sun's" editorial page. But I, for one, should have doubted that Grant M. knew his own qualifications. He seemed a gentle, dreamy person—good upholstery for a quiet corner, out of which he would move with diffidence now and then to do brilliant work. "Diffidence" is not quite fair, but he was reclusive and unobtrusive. Also, the task now put up to him might have daunted the boldest spirit in the shop. Bricks without straw, in comparison, might have seemed Montessori work for defective infants.

It turned out, however, that this task was Grant M.'s meat. Fed meat, he developed the arbitrary independence of a Napoleon, the conviction of a Calvin masked by some of the easy cleverness of a Chesterton, the capacity for labor of a caterpillar tractor, the copious versatility of a Briareus, the iconoclasm of a Shaw—and (if you leave it to me) a certain amount of sheer wrongheadedness about books and authors and such. But that last did his new occupation no material harm. For weeks he virtually wrote his "twelve-page tabloid" all himself, and almost from the start he had wide-awake readers aplenty. Half of them must have grinned at him now and then, as I do myself—but all read him, as I do myself, because they could not help it.

More recently he has gathered a reviewing staff, and incidentally has induced (without much trouble) quite a coterie of distinguished authors to be occasional contributors, as well as some amusing intransigents who have not yet arrived. It is well that he has, since otherwise the dynamo must have broken down sooner or later.

His own editorials, batted out over the standard keyboard as he could make the time, have been diverting enough for collection in two volumes; of these "Why Authors Go Wrong", the excuse for these disrespects to him, is the second. Put together to form essays, they dovetail so well that I suspect him of having written them with book publication in mind. After

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all, his wildest perversities boil down to the obvious. Like Swift, he can write well about a broomstick. I wish he wrote oftener about rods that blossom, but his broomstick impromptus are fun to reread. All he means in commanding authors to write for money or go to pot is, that artistic conscience and performance really are not incompatible with a knowledge of money's value. (As if anyone but a cracked near-genius or an art-struck gosling had ever supposed they were!) His common sense about reviewers who give themselves the airs of critics is uncommonly well put forward; he would rather call us "book reporters", and I for one would infinitely rather be so called. He can now talk publishers' shop as fluently and incisively as his own shop, and proves it in the essay called "What Every Publisher Knows". Personally, I would rather hear from a literary editor on the things many publishers don't know, and should—but that is a matter of taste.

As for the man behind the supplement, he looks like the waxing half-moon with a golden ring; murmurs all his conversation; takes a literary interest in gold and a Myopia golfer's interest in letters; talks, breathes, eats, and dreams his work; and writes picaresque yarns in vacations when he ought to be resting up.

Why Authors Go Wrong. Grant M. Overton. Moffat, Yard and Co.

MR. ELLSWORTH'S AGE OF GOLD

By William Lyon Phelps

THREE hundred pages of brilliant book-talk by a real bookman. Is it by reading thousands of rejected manuscripts that Mr. Ellsworth has become so thorough a master of the divine art of omitting? Has the melancholy monotony of failure in others shown him one sure road to success? If so, we have to thank an army of writers whose names will never be known. For it would have been so easy to spoil this book. Most authors are like fond parents, and think that others must feel the same interest in their offspring as that felt at home. Out of the bales of material at Mr. Ellsworth's disposal, his all but infallible choice in selection is the most impressive thing after the last page of this work is turned. There is not one dull or one superfluous paragraph; and in the long list of humorous anecdotes, we find only two shop-worn after dinner stories.

Mr. Ellsworth is in the real tradition. He is the old-fashioned publisher, and not the commercial manufacturer of books. With him the production of books is an art—an art used toward beneficent world-education—and he is worthy of the company he keeps. During page after page of this autobiography, we are conscious of a certain responsibility and a certain idealism, as though our author felt that he was a trustee for the public. If one needed it, one would feel an increased respect and regard for the whole race of publishers, even as our author's esteem for Mr. Gilder grew stronger with growing intimacy.

American authors come to life again—not as authors, but as men and women. One gets a vivid portrait of them all, between the two extremes represented by Lydia Sigourney and Mark Twain. Bret Harte, Walt Whitman, Edward Eggleston, Jack London, and many others who are gone, return to us again, while their living successors and contemporaries are by no means neglected. One good anecdote

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after another is the only "method" employed by the narrator, but it is employed with a skill that must be conscious—once more, it is an exhibition of the art of leaving out what is stale, trivial, pointless.

Although the method is conscious, there is a magnificent bit of irony in the chapter-analysis, that I fear is accidental. In the summary of Chapter XI, which, after discussing the cost of publishing a book, takes up Harold Bell Wright in detail, the first sentence is—Can novels be cheaper?

Stories, literally at the publisher's expense, are frankly told—stories of how a subsequently successful book was rejected. I am glad that Gilder "never got over" his regret at having rejected the manuscript of Richard Harding Davis's "Gallegher", for that mistake ought to have galled him to his last day. On the other hand, it is pleasant to hear of the faith of the publisher in a previously unknown man, Charles D. Stewart. The account of his discovery in Chicago is romantic. Alas, I fear that in spite of his being the author of two masterpieces in fiction, and one first-rate book on Shakespeare's text, Stewart is unknown still. For Mr. Ellsworth and I are the only two men in America who believe that "The Fugitive Blacksmith" and "Partners of Providence" are masterpieces, and that the latter book is worthy to stand on the same shelf with the works of Mark Twain. However, we know these books are good, and that the world in neglecting them is wrong.

The style in which Mr. Ellsworth writes is the style of good firelight conversation; and every listener will be grateful, and ready for more.

A Golden Age of Authors. A Publisher's Recollections. By William Webster Ellsworth. Houghton Mifflin Co.

A NEW AMERICAN POET

By Henry A. Lappin

"SHINING FIELDS AND DARK TOWERS" is a first book of extraordinary merit and promise. The author, John Bunker, has for the last two years and more been unobtrusively winning an increasingly faithful constituency of readers for his essays and contributions to critical literature in the periodicals. In prose, his work has no small measure of sturdy shrewdness, keen penetration, and wide sympathy. With this fine volume of verse Mr. Bunker comes quite definitely into his own as a poet.

Of the many studies that have so far been made of "the movement called Vers Libre", one of the most informative was the article contributed by Mr. Bunker to "America", under that caption, about three years ago. Though the section of "Dark Fields and Shining Towers" entitled "New York Sketches", and the study called "Complainte D'Amour", contain some of the cleverest and most interesting vers libre that the present reviewer has ever seen, Mr. Bunker is no disciple of the new school. He is essentially in the great tradition, and it is in the familiar forms, the recognized types of English verse, that he does his most ample and satisfying work. Like every poet worth his salt, he has given his days and nights to the study of the masters; the best of these poems bear traces of their author's reading of Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton. It would, however, be untrue to suggest that he is the imitator of any one poet in particular. He does not build his style upon Spenser more than upon Milton, or upon Milton more than upon Francis Thompson, the one recent poet whom Mr. Bunker has obviously

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studied with special assiduity. But his poetry is no pastiche of remembered phrases and cadences; he has wrought at it with an unwearying and delicate diligence, and in the longest and noblest of the poems here collected he has made frank avowal of apprenticeship,—

> . . . with reverent breath
> Song's crownèd monarchs have I ever sought.

These poems are written in various manners and out of many moods; almost all of them are of an exquisite workmanship and sincerity of feeling. Turning over the pages one is arrested by two poems about children: "The Whistling Boy", a lovely vignette; and the moving verses "To a Little Girl Who Died". This latter poem is as significant as any of the briefer numbers, and for its singular simplicity and restrained pathos it deserves to be quoted in full:

> *I saw you only once or twice,*
> And then I thought you very nice
> Like other little girls
> With curls,
> In lace and fluttering strings
> Of ribbons and silks and things;
> But after a time I scarce recalled a trace
> Of eyes or hair or any delicate grace
> I knew no more your face.
>
> And then . . . I heard . . . you had died,
> And drawing to a lonely place aside
> Unseen of all,—this is a secret true
> Between us two,—
> In that most lonely, lonely place aside
> I cried.
>
> Now scarce do I remember any trace
> Of your lost innocent face;
> Yet sometimes, sometimes, when I see
> A little girl such as you used to be,
> Her ways, her eyes, her hair,
> Or some slight thing that little children wear,—
> It shakes the heart of me.

Mr. Bunker's studies of "the golden age" are unfailingly right.

Many will be glad to see again the author's simple valedictory in verse to his friend, the late Joyce Kilmer, that "Farewell to a Poet, Gone to the Wars", which has of late been so frequently quoted. Something of the same manly directness is discoverable in the "New York Sketches", a series of New York "visions" set forth in vers libre. The "Tin Symphony", a poem about the vers-librists written in their own measure, is marked by real humor and truth. In their delicately fluid music, "Capitulation", "Madrigal", "Love's Intendment", and "The Stratagem" are delightful poems, and, as exercises in the Elizabethan manner, technically flawless. Mr. Bunker manifests, in "The Great Refusal" and "To Harsh Judgment Thinking Itself Wisdom", a fine insight into human motives and a beautiful tenderness toward those who go down in defeat, vanquished by "the will's defect, the blood's excess".

It was a happy thought to reprint here the fine series of sonnets, which attracted attention upon the occasion of its serial publication some months ago in the poetry pages of the Dublin review, "Studies". These sonnets of the soul's conflict and triumph reveal John Bunker as an artist of unconquerable courage, acute spiritual penetration, and luminous faith.

But it is in "Quest and Haven" (In Memory of Francis Thompson) that the talent of this new poet is to be most enjoyed. Lack of space unfortunately forbids quotation from it, and indeed the closely articulated structure and argument of the poem render it well-nigh impossible to choose out a passage adequately representative of the whole. It will perhaps be sufficient if, in conclusion, the writer of this review register his resolve that, in the "Anthology of Longer Contemporary Poems", which he fervently hopes some adventurous publisher may soon recklessly commission him

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to compile, "Quest and Haven" will be found in neighbor nearness to "The Hound of Heaven", "The Death of Adam",—that most noble achievement of Laurence Binyon,— Abercrombie's "The Sale of Saint Thomas", and "Q's" neglected masterpiece, "Columbus at Seville".

Shining Fields and Dark Towers. By John Bunker. John Lane Co.

HUMOR AND MORALE

By Wilbur Cortez Abbott

There is a little verse which has of late achieved something of the currency which it deserves, and which might well be taken as the motto for "Mr. Punch's History of the Great War". It runs something like this:

> We all are weary travelers,
> Along Life's dusty way;
> If any man can play the pipes,
> In God's name let him play.

It is a strange confession in the preface of the extraordinarily interesting and entertaining volume of pictures and comment made up from the pages of "Punch" during the war, that when the conflict began Mr. Punch "thought seriously of putting up his shutters". Even had one not followed and been comforted week by week with its issues, this brief abstract and summary of their contents which now appears would have been the measure of that counsel of despair. If humor is "the gyroscope of life", if it is "the sense of the urbane amid the barbarous", if it "gives man a proper sense of his relation to the universe", it is, as well, the great corrective of hopelessness, and a great element of what we have come to call morale, as we have discovered in the past four years.

Englishmen have three things for which they should be—and doubtless are—grateful to "Punch". The first is that, almost alone among the papers of its kind throughout the world, it kept its sense of humor through the darkest days of the conflict. It was not even drafted—it enlisted for the war, and it stuck to its post. The second is that it has not felt impelled to assure its readers week by week how inconceivably funny it intended to be at some future time—say the next issue. The third is its courage. For "Punch", like the people whose best side it represents, never lost its nerve—or its perspective. It faced the facts with the same grim confidence and the same grim humor as the men at the front. And we owe a great debt to men who, like its courageous editors, can "carry on" amid the wreck of systems and the crash of worlds.

And there is one thing more. If you look at nothing else in Mr. Punch but his history of the war, you will find his cartoons relating to ourselves and our chief executive fully worth the price. As Hamlet quoting,—

> The time is out of joint, O cursed spite
> That I was ever born to set it right,—

voice of Roosevelt (*off*), "That's so". As Noah addressed by the returning dove of peace who reports, "Nothing doing", while the American eagle poised for flight urges: "Say, Boss, what's the matter with trying me?" As a constable reproving Sweden who carries a gun "made in Germany", declaring she "didn't know it was loaded". As presenting the dove of peace with a huge olive branch, labeled "The League of Nations", to be told by that long-suffering bird: "Of course I want to please everybody, but isn't this a bit thick?" And, though it is not included here, the President coyly to the barefooted Sinn Fein maiden: "I trust I have not aroused

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false hopes, but I can never be more than a brother to you". These are some of the more entertaining views of our more than esteemed contemporary overseas.

"Having steadfastly declined the solution of a peace without victory", the epilogue declares, "the Allies entered last November on the transitional period of victory without peace." That pregnant observation is characteristic of the last great quality of this great paper—a keen and informed political sense, not, of course, infallible, but of amazing penetration and enlightenment. We may only hope, in this morass whence we have not emerged, that we may have as sane and clear-eyed guide to firmer ground; and that in the pages of "Punch" peace may have its humor no less renowned than war.

Mr. Punch's History of the Great War. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS OF 1919

BY ANNIE CARROLL MOORE

HOW much does a dream cost?' asked Peter.

"'A golden florin', answered the merchant.

"'I'll have one, please', said Peter, and he handed over the golden florin he had found as he came whistling down the road.

"The old man took a kind of wonderful sugar-plum out of the ivory horn and gave it to Peter to eat. 'You will have the dream next time you sleep', said he, and trudged on. . . . He was a very old man; his face was puckered up into a thousand wrinkles, like the skin of a shrunken apple, and he had long, snow-white hair and a white beard which reached almost to his waist. Moreover, he was strangely dressed in a robe of cherry scarlet and wore golden shoes. From a kind of belt hung two horns on silver chains, one an ordinary cow's horn, the other a beautiful horn carved of the whitest ivory and decorated with little figures of men and animals. 'The Seller of Dreams' had all kinds, he said—good, bad, true, false—even a few thrilling nightmares."

After we had read this story from "The Firelight Fairy Book" and had seen Maurice Day's picture of the enchanting figure of the old "Seller of Dreams" clothed in cherry scarlet, and the lively young Peter with his green hat and basket of eggs, we ceased to care whether we found "a Christmas story" on the title-page of any book for 1919. We had one to our own taste right here. Peter's Aunt Jane, one of the most delectable and convincing characters that ever appeared in a fairy tale, rolls into the story in a yellow coach drawn by twelve white horses. She had become queen simply by walking into a deserted castle, putting on a crown, and telling the servants she intended to be queen. "You see, Peter dear, there's nothing that a woman of determination and energy can't accomplish." "The Seller of Dreams" is a capital story from beginning to end, and we wish its title had been given to a book with so strong an appeal to boys and girls of

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ten years and older who are lovers of Howard Pyle, Stevenson, and Quiller-Couch.

We had been kept in suspense about this book ever since last July. "The Firelight Fairy Book" told us nothing we wanted to know. Such a title might cover an utterly commonplace collection of stories. We had no idea who was writing or illustrating the book. And so, at last, we yielded to the impulse to go over to Boston and find out. There we had the good fortune to meet the author, who assured us the stories were born of his own imagination, influenced by his love of the old French tales and his strong feeling for the sea. He had been in service at Verdun and he had spent several months with United States destroyers, submarines, and battleships. "The City Under the Sea", he told us, was outlined and partly written in a submarine in active pursuit of German submarines off the coast of Ireland. In his "Full Speed Ahead" we have since found a record of this experience of submarine life, of interest to boys although written as a series of articles for older readers.

Mr. Beston has lived by the sea all his life (he is still a young man) and one feels the influence of tales of buccaneers and pirates, of phantom ships, and strange wonders. His fairies seem not quite at home in some of the stories in which they appear and in no wise essential to the success of the story, but in "The Enchanted Elm" the illusion is complete.

The collection, as a whole, seems to us to have more of the quality, interest, and wonder of the Arabian Nights, conceived in an atmosphere of the western world, than that of any other book of fairy tales we can recall.

There is no hint of war on land or sea in any of the stories; there is no preaching or teaching. The author's love of beauty and sincere desire to tell a good story for art's sake will be revealed as soon as you begin to read "The Queen of Lantern Land". Maurice Day's illustrations show very much stronger qualities of imagination and action than were revealed in his pictures for "Jane, Joseph, and John".

Mr. Day has also made the illustrations in color and the drawings in black and white for a well-timed new edition of "Fables and Folk Stories", by Horace E. Scudder. We had no opportunity to talk with this artist; but it interested us, as it may others, to compare his pictures for the book of new fairy tales with those for the old fables and stories. There is a childlike quality of interpretation in his work that is very appealing to children. His animals might be stronger. The illustrations of Richard Heighway for Joseph Jacobs's delightful rendering of Æsop present an interesting contrast.

As we walked across Boston Common to The Bookshop for Boys and Girls after these illuminating visits to publishers, we wondered what Mr. Scudder would say and do about the storified Æsops, the self-conscious verse, and the devitalized, sterilized collections of folk and fairy tales so freely advertised as "free from savagery, distressing details, and excessive pathos". It is nearly forty years since "The Children's Book", a collection of the "best and most famous stories and poems in the English language", was published, and the first edition of "Fables and Folk Stories" appeared as a school reading-book at about the same time. The publication of these books marked the beginning of a new era in children's reading.

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The fable and folk-story came into their own in American public schools and households very largely through Mr. Scudder's popular renderings of traditional tales, his keen constructive criticism of the conditions affecting the child-life of his time, and his unshaken faith in "the spiritual judgment of childhood", which he likened to "a winnowing fan" separating literature from chaff in the earliest stages of reading. He it was who said of Hans Christian Andersen: "He was not only an interpreter of childhood; he was the first child who made a real contribution to literature". We have felt justified in giving space to this subject in a review of holiday books since parents, teachers, librarians, and booksellers are in a state of annual bewilderment in making a choice of versions of folk and fairy tales.

Mr. Scudder's preface to the early edition of "Fables and Folk Stories", and Charles Eliot Norton's introduction to "Heart of Oak Books", contain the substance of doctrine for those who would put childhood in touch with literature in any age. Summed up in terms of our own practical experience, it amounts to this: Begin young enough. Never feel afraid to recommend the best of its kind and leave literature free to make its own appeal. It goes without saying that you must have first-hand knowledge of the books you recommend and a growing understanding of child nature outside of books. Ever since we discovered that Clifton Johnson tripped his giants up with strings, we have made sure that "Jack the Giant Killer" was compared with the rendering of Joseph Jacobs or Charles Eliot Norton before purchasing a new collection in which the story appears. We have been asked if we did not believe that the reading of fairy tales helped bring on the war. We wanted to put this question to Lord Dunsany, who has been through two wars, when we heard him say that the two books he read most in early childhood were "Grimm's Fairy Tales" and those of Hans Christian Andersen, and that he now feels his parents could not have chosen more wisely. We feel confident that he had a good translation of each, for he proved his intimacy with Randolph Caldecott on his visit to the Children's Room of the New York Public Library —and made first acquaintance there with Leslie Brooke's pictures, for fairy tales and nursery rhymes, with which he had a very good time.

King Albert of Belgium, Queen Elizabeth, and the Duke of Brabant had visited the children's room a few days before we went to Boston. No wonder we were possessed by fairy tales, having seen one come true before our very eyes.

We long to do an article on the folk-tales of reviewing, but we have no editorial sanction for the idea and we must content ourselves with sharing one more Boston impression. In a dingy old building near the South Station we found plenty of evidence that imagination and courage still live in the publishing world. We had been captivated before leaving New York by the "Nonsense Book", a collection of limericks composed by other people but copied into a book and illustrated by Susan Hale in a manner suggestive of Edward Lear. The remarkably good form of this book and of a boys' book bearing this publisher's imprint made us want to know more about the publisher. He is one person, we discovered, with a very definite interest in art and a refreshing point of view. He showed the plates reproducing in color forty paintings by Italian Primitives for

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"The Story of Jesus", by Mrs. Richard Henry Dana, Jr., and some pages of the text. Mrs. Dana planned this book for the religious education of her own children. In the choice of Bible text, as in her selection of reproductions from the old paintings, Mrs. Dana has preserved the full dignity and beauty of both. The book is to be published in December and its price is $15.00. We think it will meet a need we have often heard expressed.

"Inklings for Thinklings" was published on the day of our visit. For this book Susan Hale wrote the verses and made the drawings. Giant Longlegs winding the church clock and the fish flying out at the chimney top, would alone make the book worth owning. This book and the "Nonsense Book" furnish incentive to children who like to make pictures on paper or in their own minds. That the text is in script is a matter of minor importance. Children may or may not read it. The drawings are the distinctive feature of the books, and the books are so well made as to admit of hard usage in schools and libraries.

Those who have read Susan Hale's "Letters" will remember that they are illustrated by some very amusing sketches from all parts of the world. We have refreshed ourselves with these letters at intervals ever since we began reading for this review. The letters to her sister Lucretia were made personal to us by our early and strong affection for "The Peterkin Papers". We discovered the Peterkins in a bound volume of "Our Young Folks". They were the first real people we ever found in print and we thought them very funny. We believed that we alone knew them and delighted in repeating what they said and did. None of the "letters of Susan Hale" are written to children; but they are brimming over with fun and the joy of going on with life, whether it meant visiting a succession of Christmas trees in Germany or entertaining a house party of young people in Rhode Island. We were naturally reminded of Edward Everett Hale (Susan was his sister), his intimate association with children and his writing for them. We were still with the Hale family when we secured a copy of "Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children" for "over night only". Our enjoyment of the picture letters was all the keener since they recalled Mr. Roosevelt's expressed delight in "Our Young Folks", and in "The William Henry Letters", by Mrs. Diaz, which he first read in that magazine. We yield to none of many temptations to quote from a book we should all own. There are two outstanding things about it in this connection—at all times and at all ages Mr. Roosevelt treated his children as equals—and he *took time*, about three-quarters of an hour every evening, to read aloud to them. "This reading to them in the evening gives me a chance to see them that I would not otherwise have, although sometimes it is rather hard to get the time."

We venture to predict that if several thousand fathers of American families would begin to read aloud to their children on a similar basis of equality, we should see great changes in many publications we have recently reviewed. John Martin's "Big Book for Little Folks, No. 3" is one of them. We have read it through. Parts of it we have read aloud—a test we frequently apply in reviewing. We have looked at all its pictures from several points of view. We shall not attempt to discuss its original features. We do not like them, but there are many who do. We limit our criticism to the

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small treatment of great subjects as instanced in retold and written-down versions of Bible stories, myths, folk-tales, and biographical stories by various authors, and to the lack of any arrangement or continuity of presentation of a great variety of subjects. Two quotations from life sketches will serve to illustrate:

> Washington was a child of bright opportunity. He was born in a home of wealth, good breeding, and honorable beliefs, yet he founded a nation in which a child of the humblest people may grow to the highest place of honor and service.

Thoreau fares worse than Washington.

> He was *so kind!* and he was a busy man too. He built his own house. He had a garden. He made lead pencils. He wrote books. Most likely we never did know a busy man who was more kind that he was to everybody—animals and all—children and all. No wonder he became a very famous man.

"When you are writing for children", says Anatole France in "My Friend's Book", "do not assume a style for the occasion. Think your best and write your best. Let the whole thing live."

Emilie Poulsson has certainly done this in her admirable translation from the Norwegian of Dikken Zwilgmeyer's "What Happened to Inger Johanne". The book is alive from beginning to end. It is thoroughly Norwegian in atmosphere — mountains, fjords, and people all came back to us with a rush, but the character of Inger Johanne is universal in its appeal. She is so purely objective and so entirely natural that her adventures and pranks will interest boys as well as girls. We have already shared the chapter on "Traveling with a Billy Goat" with a boy of ten, who says Inger Johanne is more like Tom Sawyer than anybody else. The chapter on "Christmas Mumming", and the one dealing with Inger Johanne's desire to be a circus rider, are capital for reading aloud. These stories have been popular in Norway since their first appearance in 1890. The illustrations by Mrs. Florence Liley Young give an admirable and very understanding interpretation of the text. We regret that the book does not appear in more distinctive form. It looks too much like a great many other books for girls, and with its strange title will need introduction to take its full place in a library collection. It is just the kind of book we have been asking for as a girl's story, and we are not surprised that it comes from Norway. We have been waiting years for an English rendering of the Norse myths by a Norwegian.

In "The Children of Odin" Padraic Colum has given a free rendering of the myths of the poetic and the prose Eddas. Mr. Colum tells us that he has done his work directly from the Eddas and in consultation with Norwegian scholars. We feel the Celtic strain more strongly than the northern atmosphere, however, and prefer existing versions for reading and story-telling. Mr. Colum had boys and girls above twelve years in mind when preparing his text. We have not seen Willy Pogany's illustrations, some of which are to be in color.

"Czechoslovak Fairy Tales" is the most distinctive and interesting of the juvenile publications of a new New York firm. Parker Fillmore has retold these Bohemian folk-tales with a fine appreciation of fancy, fun, and fairies impossible to render in a literal translation, of which we have read several. In "Katcha and the Devil" the characteristics of the Bohemian devil are revealed. Like the Norwegian troll he is often terrifying in appearance, but is easily imposed upon and is generally made the butt of all sorts of jokes and pranks. We read

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"The Golden Godmother" last summer and were then impressed by Mr. Fillmore's background of reading and study, and his very human application of it to a difficult piece of work. The frontispiece and cover design—three little brides with a peacock—are in the brilliant colors of the Czech national costume. They are the work of Jan Matulka, a young Bohemian artist, who has also done the full page illustrations and the striking decorations in black and white. We have not seen the finished book, but we wish there might have been more illustrations in color and a more spacious setting for them. The book is unique.

"The Wonder Garden", a collection of nature myths and tales edited by Frances Jenkins Olcott and illustrated by Milo Winter, has not been available for examination.

Seumas MacManus has written a characteristic book of Irish stories called "Lo and Behold Ye!" "The Man Who Would Dream" is a story with which to delight boys on Hallowe'en. Many of the stories are good for reading aloud and for the story-teller. "Doctor Danny", Irish stories by Ruth Sawyer, who heard some of the tales she tells on a long-ago visit to Ireland, was published early in the year and immediately added to our collection of books for older girls and boys.

The outlook in stories for girls is encouraging. "The Pool of Stars", by Cornelia Meigs, is a very well-written story, sustaining until the end a mystery, and good comradeship between a boy and girl of high school age.

Mrs. Seaman's "The Slipper Point Mystery" is for younger girls. It is an out-of-doors story with a touch of history, some adventure, and a very nice friendship between two girls.

"The Refugee Family", by Flavia Canfield, is not as interesting a story as the title promises. The information is authentic and there is some account of the work of the American Committee for Devastated France. Story-reading girls want atmosphere and color, and these are to be found in "Comrade Rosalie", by Mary Constance Du Bois, and "Vive La France", first written for "St Nicholas" by the Knipes. Both stories are interesting and well written. Mrs. Abbott has set the stage for too many characters and situations in "Larkspur". The Girl Scout interest was crowded out by the French orphan, her grandmother, and a German spy. German spies are in all the stories with war interest. But we prefer reading of them to having anything to do with "Rosemary Greenaway" or her family. Joslyn Gray writes too well to go on presenting life so morbidly. "Betty Bell", by Fannie Kilbourne, is not in the least like Miss Alcott's stories. It is a very readable, thoroughly sophisticated, and well written analysis of a cross-section of Betty Bell at sixteen. We do not recommend the book for children's reading. In the libraries its title would immediately attract girls from ten to twelve whose mothers would object to it. It is more nearly comparable to "Seventeen" than to any other book, but that there is a very considerable difference we will endeavor to show in another article dealing more directly with the reading of older girls and boys in THE BOOKMAN for February.

That girls read boys' books more than they ever did, and that they always have to some extent, is evidenced by our own reaction to Walter Dyer's "Ben the Battle Horse". No one who loves a horse could help reading that book. Our one-time familiarity with the life and habits of horses, assisted

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by a book of colored plates of famous trotting horses, laid the cornerstone of our library experience with boys in their 'teens. Someone recommended reading from Baldwin's "Horse Fair", but the boys of "Jackson's Hollow" would have none of it. This book would have held them spellbound. We think a good many girls will read "Bob Thorpe, Sky Fighter in the Lafayette Flying Corps". Why shouldn't they? The book is not merely an exciting story; Austin Bishop has furnished accurate information on the subject of flying in readable form. "The Romance of Aircraft", by Laurence Yard Smith, gives an interesting historical account of flying for boys and girls, although written for older readers. "Up the Mazaruni for Diamonds", by William J. La Varre, is so well written and illustrated by photographs taken by the young explorer himself and, moreover, so well printed, that we found ourselves reading it a second time. The book has an introduction by Mr. Fiala.

"Shasta of the Wolves", by Olaf Baker, an English author, also attracted us for reading aloud and for the fine illustrations by Charles Livingston Bull.

We have just discovered why, with the best intentions, we cannot read "The Book of Bravery, Second Series". It is arranged in "an ascending scale of courage". The third series due in 1920 will be the highest. We shall begin at the top. We have grave suspicions that many boys are waiting to do the same thing. The work has somewhat the value of collective biography for library and school purposes.

Elva S. Smith has edited a valuable collection of patriotic verse and prose. "Good Old Stories", selected by Miss Smith, who dedicated this collection to Caroline M. Hewins of the Hartford Public Library, was published earlier in the year. Miss Smith's feeling for literature for children and her long experience of appraising it for the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh are expressed in her compilations.

Franklin K. Mathiews's "Boy Scouts Book of Stories" comprises a good selection of well-known stories from Mark Twain, Quiller-Couch, O. Henry, and others.

We regret that we have not yet read William Heyliger's "High Benton", which we are told is the best story he has written.

We did read Harold Latham's "Marty Lends a Hand" and we think it a distinct advance over his book of last year. The boys are not yet quite so free from supervision as we like to have them in a boy's book, but the mushroom growing in the old copper mine was a clever idea and there are German spies to be dealt with. Mr. Barbour has written four books. Mr. Altsheler's last book, "The Sun of Quebec", was mentioned in the September review. "The Heart of Pinocchio" is not kin to the well-known classic and will prove a disappointment to those who order it without examination. There are several more books for little children. "The Scotch Twins", by Lucy Fitch Perkins, was not available for examination. "News from Notown", by Eleanor Ellis Perkins, is a book of humorous verses, illustrated by her mother, Lucy Fitch Perkins. Of books of verse, we would choose "When We Were Little: Children's Rhymes of Oyster Bay", by Mary Fanny Youngs, with an introduction by Theodore Roosevelt, and illustrated by photographs of the Roosevelt children. "The Burgess Bird Book", by Thornton Burgess, with fifty-seven colored plates drawn by Louis Agassiz Fuertes, has been

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described by Dr. William T. Hornaday as the best children's book on bird life in existence. "The Children's Life of the Bee", selected and arranged by Alfred Sutro and Herschel Williams, preserves the spirit and very largely the language of Maeterlinck. N. C. Wyeth's pictures for "The Last of the Mohicans" are superb in color and action. One of the most beautiful books of the year is illustrated by Jessie Willcox Smith. "At the Back of the North Wind" has given her opportunity to reveal a depth and imagination beyond anything in her earlier work. There is also a new and smaller edition of "The Water Babies", illustrated by the same artist, and the colorful poster for "Children's Book Week" was made by Jessie Willcox Smith. "The Book of Wonder Voyages", by Joseph Jacobs, has been reprinted in a reduced size. "Good Wolf", by Frances Hodgson Burnett, appears in a reprint as if it were a new story. "Saint Joan of Arc", by Mark Twain, is a short sketch with an attractive cover and three illustrations in color by Howard Pyle. Boutet de Monvel's "Joan of Arc" is being reprinted in English and will be ready in January. "Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes", edited by Lawrence Elmendorf, and illustrated in color and in black and white by Boyd Smith, was more fully noticed in the September review. "The Cart of Many Colors", a story of Italian life by Nannine Meiklejohn concerning which we have had many inquiries, is still on the presses. Dorothy Canfield's "History of France for Young Folks" will not be ready until spring. "Heroes of the Great Crusade", reported as under way during the summer, was abandoned by its publishers on the publication of Mary Parkman's "Fighters for Peace", by a New York firm.

Every time we try to write down our impressions of "A Journey to the Garden Gate", by Ralph M. Townsend, "David Blaize and the Blue Door" comes to mind. They are both dream stories, but so different. We think Mr. Townsend's story is well written,

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The Firelight Fairy Book. By Henry B. Beston. The Atlantic Monthly Press.
Nonsense Book. By Susan Hale. Marshall Jones Co.
The Story of Jesus. By Mrs. Richard Henry Dana, Jr. Marshall Jones Co.
Inklings for Thinklings. By Susan Hale. Marshall Jones Co.
Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children. By Joseph Bucklin Bishop. Charles Scribner's Sons.
What Happened to Inger Johanne. By Dikken Zwilgmeyer. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard.
The Children of Odin. By Padraic Colum. The Macmillan Co.
Czechoslovak Fairy Tales. By Parker Fillmore. Harcourt, Brace and Howe.
Lo and Behold Ye! By Seumas MacManus. Frederick A. Stokes Co.
*Doctor Danny. By Ruth Sawyer. Harper and Bros.
The Pool of Stars. By Cornelia Meigs. The Macmillan Co.
The Slipper Point Mystery. By Augusta H. Seaman. The Century Co.
The Refugee Family. By Flavia Canfield. Harcourt, Brace and Howe.
Comrade Rosalie. By Mary Constance Du Bois. The Century Co.
Vive La France. By E. B. and A. A. Knipe. The Century Co.
*Betty Bell. By Fannie Kilbourne. Harper and Bros.
Ben the Battle Horse. By Walter Dyer. Henry Holt and Co.
Bob Thorpe, Sky Fighter. By Austin Bishop. Harcourt, Brace and Howe.
Up the Mazaruni for Diamonds. By William J. La Varre. Marshall Jones Co.
Shasta of the Wolves. By Olaf Baker. Dodd, Mead and Co.
The Book of Bravery, Second Series. By Henry W. Lanier. Charles Scribner's Sons.
Peace and Patriotism. Compiled by Elva S. Smith. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co.
The Boy Scouts Book of Stories. Edited by Franklin K. Mathiews. D. Appleton and Co.
Marty Lends a Hand. By H. S. Latham. The Macmillan Co.
News from Notown. By Eleanor Ellis Perkins. Houghton Mifflin Co.
When We Were Little. By Mary Fanny Youngs. E. P. Dutton and Co.
The Burgess Bird Book. By Thornton Burgess. Little, Brown and Co.
The Children's Life of the Bee. By Maurice Maeterlinck. Dodd, Mead and Co.
The Last of the Mohicans. By J. F. Cooper. Charles Scribner's Sons.
At the Back of the North Wind. By George MacDonald. David McKay.
The Water Babies. By Charles Kingsley. Dodd, Mead and Co.
The Book of Wonder Voyages. By Joseph Jacobs. G. P. Putnam's Sons.
Saint Joan of Arc. By Mark Twain. Illustrated by Howard Pyle. Harper and Bros.
Joan of Arc. By Boutet de Monvel. The Century Co.
Fighters for Peace. By Mary R. Parkman. The Century Co.
A Journey to the Garden Gate. By Ralph M. Townsend. Houghton Mifflin Co.
David Blaize and the Blue Door. By E. F. Benson. George H. Doran Company.
*Jeremy. By Hugh Walpole. George H. Doran Company.

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*For the adult reader.

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but that it is addressed to an audience whose sophistication extends to Milo Winter's pictures of ladybugs and beetles. As for "David Blaize" he wears well; the chapter on flying is a never-ending joy. "David Blaize" is constantly meeting "Jeremy" behind "The Blue Door" in our imagination. Why shouldn't he? David Blaize was six when he found the key and Jeremy was eight on the birthday his Uncle Samuel gave him the toy village. They are wonderful books, these two, and each seems to deepen the impression of the other.

LATEST MODES IN FICTION

BY DOROTHY SCARBOROUGH

THE fall offerings in fiction are like a fashion display with their bewildering variety, their efforts at novelty, their strivings toward the spectacularly effective. American-made they are for the most part, though with some admirable importations from England, and with others evidencing the barbaric influence of the East. The French touch is negligible. Paris obviously makes no attempt to set up novel vogues for the United States, since she has sent over this month only a couple of models, one being Clemenceau's "The Strongest", which isn't at all tigerish and will not be fancied much, and another by Alphonse Daudet's son-in-law, which proves that genius does not necessarily descend to in-laws.

The fall samples are attractive, with their modish jackets of gay hues, with adjectival coloring superficially applied. The recurrent wonder rises as to why the blurb writers don't themselves write stories for us, since their composition shows a fictional inventiveness, a freedom from tiresome truth exceeding any revealed in the books they cry up. Affairs are ill arranged in this writing world! But perhaps it's better as it is, after all, since there's a larger and more varied reading public for jackets than for books.

The materials used this fall are outwardly fetching, but a close examination reveals much shoddy stuff that will not last. Since most persons, however, choose their novels with no concern for a second season, nobody but the critics will complain to any extent.

The autumn styles show interesting variations from the spring models in narrative. Uniforms are worn very little now. Fiction-factories turned out such an over-supply of khaki and navy blue in men's wear, and Red Cross, Salvation Army, and Y. W. C. A. costumes for women during the preceding seasons, that the public has come to think them too common and prefers other styles. The military cut is out of date, though some prophets predict a revival of it in the next two years. Military severity is unbecoming to many characters, though one must be in fashion, of course, at whatever sacrifice, and at present the mannequins, gratified at being relieved from the strain of holding the heroic pose, relax gratefully to civilian slouch.

Conservation of material is shown in the making-over of unused war fic-

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tion to what are announced as "after-the-war" cuts, since various lines show hasty remodeling to fit the change. It's easy enough to scissor war stuff and make it over into reconstruction patterns. But thrift is commendable. There are some volumes that are frankly old style, dating back even to the years before Uncle Sam ordered himself a uniform. Some publishers that didn't make a quick turn-over of their stock at the armistice change of seasons, show determination to dispose of it even now. They don't even announce any markdown in price, so far has profiteering gone among us! Elizabeth Robins's "The Messenger" is a sample of that lot. Readers who have liked this author's previous fiction will do well to examine carefully before buying this, for it is custom-made, hastily put together, and quite out of vogue. A German spy, credulous English folk, Americans reluctant to believe Teutonic perfidy—where is the old clothes man? *"I cash clo'es!"* But, of course, it's the poor quality of the goods, rather than the cut that makes us reject this. Really good stuff lasts a long time.

The predominating materials are pretty much the same now as in other seasons, though the patterns of the weave show slight differences. Adventure, mystery, sex, humor, the homespun of daily life, are turned with artful hands, sometimes skilful and sometimes not, to invite the purchaser. There is less diabolic dye used now than in year before last, for with the coming of peace the villain literature has lost its vogue. But this tailor's figure has been employed too long and had better be discarded.

Much of the present fiction shows a nervousness that is unrestful, a state of perpetual motion and emotion, a St. Vitus's dance movement. Some books keep things going all the time, without getting anywhere. If psychologists could only devise method for utilizing the nervous energy of novels, much of which is now wasted, what motive power we might have! Yet in some volumes the story snails along like a small boy sent on an errand by his mother, while in others it races like the same urchin bound for a circus.

Much of the output of the month might be called fiction of escape, indicating the suppressed desires of the author and reader to do something different from the daily job. Thwarted impulses get themselves printed and hence in a manner indulged, vicariously gratifying other people at the same time. These stories about buried treasure, for instance, never fail to thrill us, because they answer a longing of our souls. To each one of us, however desk-bound or kitchen-cabined we may be, some treasure island lifts alluringly out of the mists, till in desperate imagination we drop the pen, the broom, the hoe, or whatever implement of conventional toil we may be fastened to, and go on strange quests. Our own fancy is so wild and free, our own adventurings so brilliant and successful, that by contrast the tame tales that writers tell seem stupidly flat. We hopefully pick up a volume like "Spanish Doubloons", by Camilla Kenyon, for example, to read of a search for hidden riches, different in that the expedition is planned and directed by women, and the adventurous young woman captures a sweetheart as well as locating the treasure. That island in the Pacific is anything but peaceful after those dissentient females land there with their masculine assistants,—though the book itself isn't

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a particularly valuable find. Roy Norton's "Drowned Gold" is another yarn in which a woman is enterprising in the hunt for treasure, here the method of recovery being a converted submarine, and the loot on a ship sunk by German torpedoes. Woman is active these days, not content with hauling in the bullion, but insisting on discovering romance for herself in the person of her rival.

Other sorts of adventure as well are furnished in plenty for those who don't care for digging or diving. "Gabrielle of the Lagoon", by A. Safroni-Middleton, carries us to the South Sea Islands, where a beautiful white girl, with a touch of the tar-brush in her ancestry, goes through dizzy experiences, dancing before savages at midnight in the forest depths, flirting with whatever man comes along, and being abducted by a rajah and carried to a distant island. The author seems wishful to write as lusciously as he can, to drag his heroine through as many lurid adventures as possible and yet leave her climactically unscathed. But the reader is rather bored with it all. "Parvati", by Robert Chauvelot, has for its central character a maharanee who falls in love with a French artist and endures thrills and terrors for his sake. Here, as in the previous book, adjectives are strained to their utmost to lash the reader to pity and woe, but he is more inclined to yawn instead.

"The League of the Scarlet Pimpernel", by Baroness Orczy, is safe and sane by contrast, for it merely exposes its hero to the savagery of French revolutionists. And we're not really frightened much, because we know the Pimpernel of old and are confident of his ability to extricate himself from complicating dangers. His natural ingenuity gives him power that appears supernatural, and in this collection of tales he escapes in so many forms that we can scarcely keep up with him.

Mystery stories we have in plenty, too, this month. There's our old friend, "Raffles Haw", republished with a couple of other Conan Doyle stories, and reminding us that man still has his unceasing desire to find the magic means to gain unlimited wealth. The philosopher's stone and the elixir of life seem less impossible now in these days when monkey glands will give renewal of youth and chemistry is finding unguessed marvels, than they did when Doyle first wrote of Raffles.

We can't conventionally haunt opium dens these days, and the laws are getting to be so rigid that we're not allowed to drug ourselves into dreams at home; but Sax Rohmer can "Dope" us into vicarious experiences of the drug habitué, with his thrillful plot structure to keep us entertained the while. He rather strains the point when he has to resort to a wax figure for his villain—though plenty of fictitious villains are nothing more—and the motivation for Mrs. Irvin's mysterious actions seems forced; but the book is readable, though less engrossing than Rohmer's tales of Fu-Manchu.

Naturally, we have detective stories in the list, for every reader is a potential Sherlock Holmes or Gaboriau, delighting to ferret out the mystery of crime. "Simon", by J. Storer Clouston, the best of the present output, communicates some genuine spinal effects, and succeeds in keeping the reader guessing as to the solution until the end. The detective story is the most artificial and studied form of fiction, with its nicety of incidents fitted together in a way that life never

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knows; but it gives a double pleasure in that it permits the reader to imagine how, were he the criminal, he could better have concealed the crime, and were he the sleuth, how he might more quickly have solved the mystery. The clues are handled pretty well by Clouston.

Sex, too, is with us, as usual. Slightly varying in manner, but not particularly noteworthy in effect, it furnishes the motif for numerous books. Some writers try to give a sexplanation of everything! Frederic Arnold Kummer and Mary Christian picture for us Peggy-Elise, a model in more senses than one, they'd have us believe, who reforms a dissolute artist by Trilbying for his statue of Phryne, that most unconventional lady. Kummer seems shallower than usual here. "Youth Goes Seeking", by Oscar Graeve, is a more sincere attempt, and is not bad for a first novel, but is far from the excellence of this author's short stories. The youth in question plunges from a cloistral home in Brooklyn to the revelries of Greenwich Village, and experiences the soul convulsions common in that atmosphere. He falls in love with a girl whose principles regarding marriage refuse to be *altared*, and so he offers gallantly to dispense with the ceremony; but on her illogical refusal he marries a street-walker and takes her to the ancestral home in Brooklyn. Most young writers feel they must write one novel psychoanalyzing Greenwich natives, and so perhaps it's as well for Oscar Graeve to get this off his mind and turn to the worth-while work he is capable of doing. A similar setting and similar effect are observed in Rita Wellman's "The Wings of Desire", where another unsophisticated youth arrives in lower Manhattan to suffer demoralization of spirit. The book has some vivid characterization, some excellent passages of analysis, but as a whole seems chaotic, lacking the touch of art that could justify the morbidity of the material.

Clarence Budington Kelland writes a thematic story in "The Little Moment of Happiness", his argument being that it was quite all right for American soldiers in France to engage in unconventional affairs with light Parisians. The mother at home who writes warning her son against the vice of Paris is ridiculed as warped by provincial prejudice; and the American girl war-working over there placidly discusses the situation with the entangled soldier, assuring him that it doesn't matter in the least. American mothers will probably not care much for this novel,—and they'll not suffer any great loss. Louis Wilkinson's "Brute Gods"—which has decidedly more of the brute than god in it!—is a study in neurotic and erotic temperament. The title-page says, "Ask, is love divine?", to which the story answers that it isn't—very. This is far from belonging to the school of cheerfulness favored in American fiction. The effect, on the whole, is one of abnormality, for certain aspects of life are given disproportionate importance, and the young man's thought life is unwholesome. Yet the novel has strength, undeniable though repellant, and some of the characters are hatefully vitalized—the father, for instance, who is loathsomely real.

We feel the need of humor to counteract the gloom of this pessimistic fiction, and while there isn't a great amount of fun this month,—none of an immortal nature,—we find books that give us little moments of happiness. There are two collections of larky tales about fighters, "Our Casu-

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alty", by G. A. Birmingham, and "The Exploits of Bilge and Ma", by Peter Clark Macfarlane. The first collection has a tale of the man who was by accident pronounced dead, and forced by red tape to be buried, over his vehement protests, then removed from his grave danger and hustled out of the district. Various other delectable instances of nonsense are related as fact in this volume which is good for the blues—navy or otherwise. Macfarlane tells of two mates on the United States destroyer "Judson", on duty in the Irish Sea, whose pranks lighten the gloom of war. The best specimen of humor for the month, however, is Alice Duer Miller's "The Charm School"—the account of a handsome young man who suddenly inherits a girls' school and makes astonishing changes in the curriculum, on the theory that women need to learn fascination, not scholarship. With a deft lightness that at times shows wit and satire, the writer develops the complications and the outcome of the hero's experiment. This book, if put on the reading list for high schools, might prove upsetting to discipline.

Those who like a straightaway love story uncluttered by modern problems will find S. G. Tallentyre's "Love Laughs Last" readable for its romance and its whimsical rendering of life. For example, the young husband and wife suffer an August visitation from an elderly aunt. "When she was well out of the room, Henry growled, 'When is that woman going?' To which Camilla replied, 'I don't know, Henry dear, but she has brought her *winter* bonnet.' "

A more subtle and sophiscated story of love and unusual intrigue is "Yellowleaf", by a writer whose pen name is Sacha Gregory. The situation here is rather novel and is played up with skill, while the characters are original in their conception and development, with a prize villain, and a murder that gratifies the concealed longing for the melodramatic which we all possess.

A volume of short stories that possess unhackneyed charm is "The New Decameron", "by various hands", a highly entertaining collection of yarns, whose authors have attempted —with good measure of success—to catch the wit and interest of Boccaccio without his naughtiness. Some of the stories have a sombre beauty, while the spinster schoolmistress's narrative in vers libre is an amusing example of reticent raciness.

Harvey O'Higgins's volume of short stories, "From the Life", comes with a shock of difference from the conventional form and is a book to be valued. Here is no feather-fluff of romance, no sermonic pill disguised as caramel, no mere effort to entertain the brainless, but life shown seriously, with an inexorable logic of events in harmony with character. Mr. O'Higgins has chosen for his medium of expression the character study somewhat resembling Dreiser's studies of his "Twelve Men".

Other books of the month attempt a thoughtful representation of life, as M. H. Hedges's "Iron City"—a first novel which has worth as a study in the narrowness of some college circles and the industrial problems of the day, though revealing the intolerance of youth, the prejudices of immaturity toward ideas opposite to one's own. Mr. Hedges would have us think that college folk are chiefly provincial bigots, and laborers all saints and martyrs,—but while reserving the right given by recent events to hold divergent views, we like the book. William Dudley Pelley tells a human

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and appealing story, contrasting two ideals of life, in "The Greater Glory". The character of Mary, who through poverty, hardship, and bitter grief, holds to what is high and true, is a big personality in fact, but Pelley isn't content to let her life speak for itself, and must have her continually preaching to her foil, Mib Henderson, who thinks only of tinsel gauds and scorns children. The book becomes too sermonic. Propaganda is always dangerous to art.

Phyllis Bottome's "A Servant of Reality" will linger like a bright and mournful echo in the heart. No record of war's physical or material devastation could be more appalling than this account of spiritual warping, of the casting away of a life like Kitty's. The story carries us with it on a surge of emotion, even though we do not believe that the fundamental concept of it is true. How could a woman of the elemental fineness of soul we are expected to concede Kitty, stoop to a dissolute life because her lover has been reported missing in battle? Despite the training her extraordinary father gives her,—he teaches her in a charm school for one, that the only feminine obligation is to fascinate,—would a girl such as she is until the catastrophe sell herself, and repeatedly, without love? *No!* As a study in charm the book is well worth reading, while its pathos clutches at the heart, and its cleverness is an intellectual refreshment.

The two novels of the month which are most impressive in content, most finished in art, likewise come from England. May Sinclair's "Mary Olivier: a Life", and W. Somerset Maugham's "The Moon and Sixpence" strike us with a terrific impact of personality, overwhelm us with a sense of reality. Though the angle of observation is different,—as in the first story we are Mary, from the age of two to that of forty-seven seeing life through her wide-open eyes; and in the second we observe the artist Strickland through the glimpses that other persons have of him,—the effect is similarly vivid. We suffer with the sensitive, morbid child, the thwarted woman, and we long to do violence to the selfish, jealous parents who warp her life. Mary, the little girl, is more actual than Mary grown up. Where has the analysis of infantile fears and dreams and passionate joys been given with such faithful sympathy? Mary, feeling so intensely the obsession about meeting funerals, the tingling

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The Strongest. By Premier Georges Clemenceau. Doubleday, Page and Co.
The Messenger. By Elizabeth Robins. The Century Co.
Spanish Doubloons. By Camilla Kenyon. The Bobbs-Merrill Co.
Drowned Gold. By Roy Norton. Houghton Mifflin Co.
Gabrielle of the Lagoon. By A. Safroni-Middleton. J. B. Lippincott Co.
Parvati. By Robert Chauvelot. The Century Co.
The League of the Scarlet Pimpernel. By Baroness Orczy. George H. Doran Company.
The Doings of Raffles Haw. By A. Conan Doyle. George H. Doran Company.
Dope. By Sax Rohmer. Robert M. McBride and Co.
Simon. By J. Storer Clouston. George H. Doran Company.
Peggy-Elise. By Frederic Arnold Kummer and Mary Christian. The Century Co.
Youth Goes Seeking. By Oscar Graeve. Dodd, Mead and Co.
The Wings of Desire. By Rita Wellman. Moffat, Yard and Co.
The Little Moment of Happiness. By Clarence Budington Kelland. Harper and Bros.
Brute Gods. By Louis Wilkinson. Alfred A. Knopf.
Our Casualty. By G. A. Birmingham. George H. Doran Company.
The Exploits of Bilge and Ma. By Peter Clark Macfarlane. Little, Brown and Co.
The Charm School. By Alice Duer Miller. Harper and Bros.
Love Laughs Last. By S. G. Tallentyre. George H. Doran Company.
Yellowleaf. By Sacha Gregory. J. B. Lippincott Co.
The New Decameron. By Various Hands. Robert M. McBride and Co.
From the Life. By Harvey O'Higgins. Harper and Bros.
Iron City. By M. H. Hedges. Boni and Liveright.
The Greater Glory. By William Dudley Pelley. Little, Brown and Co.
A Servant of Reality. By Phyllis Bottome. The Century Co.
Mary Olivier: a Life. By May Sinclair. The Macmillan Co.
The Moon and Sixpence. By W. Somerset Maugham. George H. Doran Company.

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sensuousness of music, the mystery of subjects such as birth and religion, the nervous imaginings which children bear in silence, is memorable. Consider her thought, "Supposing God dropped the sun!" With her five senses alert and a preternatural fancy she sees, hears, tastes, feels, and touches life with rapture. She sees "poems made of the white dust of the road, of the wind in the green trees. . . . a moving white pattern of sound . . . the French verbs, grey, slender as little verses on the page . . . happiness sharp and still like white light". Yet such a poet-soul as this must be victimized by a mother's abominable egoism!

It is just the other way about with Strickland, the artist. When he makes up his forty-year-old mind to be a painter, he thrusts everything out of his path. Wife, children, home, friendships, honor, go down like tenpins before him. In his colossal selfishness he is as remorseless, as irresistible as a landslide. He is like one of his own pictures—sinister, incomprehensible, but a work of genius. The book has a mordant satire, a corrosive cleverness, that make it distinctive. In reading Miss Sinclair's novel we think of Jean-Christophe, and of the impressionism of Dorothy Richardson's fiction, but "The Moon and Sixpence" is of the order of Melchizedek, without genealogy.

WRITS

BY DAVID MORTON

ON what frail charactry your fame depends!
A trick of light behind low orchard trees,
An April dusk, the quiet way it ends,
Or tulip beds—such trivial things as these,
You who had been more vivid than the Spring,
Live in pale writs impermanent as hers
Whose rose is soon an unrecorded thing
Of faded, indecipherable blurs.

Day after sullen day, there is no sign,
No shining word, nor any phrase of you,
Till suddenly—white apple trees in line
Scrawl on the dark a lovely thing I knew,
Or tulips, blowing where new Springs befall,
Spell out your name against a ruined wall.

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FICTION IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The following lists of books in demand in September in the public libraries of the United States have been compiled from reports made by two hundred representative libraries, in every section of the country and in cities of all sizes down to ten thousand population. The order of choice is as stated by the librarians.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1. Dangerous Days	*Mary Roberts Rinehart*	DORAN
2. Saint's Progress	*John Galsworthy*	SCRIBNER
3. Christopher and Columbus	*"Elizabeth"*	DOUBLEDAY
4. The Young Visiters	*Daisy Ashford*	DORAN
5. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
6. The Re-creation of Brian Kent	*Harold Bell Wright*	BOOK SUPPLY CO.

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1. Dangerous Days	*Mary Roberts Rinehart*	DORAN
2. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
3. The Desert of Wheat	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
4. Christopher and Columbus	*"Elizabeth"*	DOUBLEDAY
5. The Tin Soldier	*Temple Bailey*	PENN
6. The Young Visiters	*Daisy Ashford*	DORAN

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
2. The Re-creation of Brian Kent	*Harold Bell Wright*	BOOK SUPPLY CO.
3. Dangerous Days	*Mary Roberts Rinehart*	DORAN
4. The Cricket	*Marjorie Benton Cooke*	DOUBLEDAY
5. The Tin Soldier	*Temple Bailey*	PENN
6. Saint's Progress	*John Galsworthy*	SCRIBNER

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

1. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
2. The Re-creation of Brian Kent	*Harold Bell Wright*	BOOK SUPPLY CO.
3. Dangerous Days	*Mary Roberts Rinehart*	DORAN
4. The Arrow of Gold	*Joseph Conrad*	DOUBLEDAY
5. The Tin Soldier	*Temple Bailey*	PENN
6. The Young Visiters	*Daisy Ashford*	DORAN

WESTERN STATES

1. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
2. Dangerous Days	*Mary Roberts Rinehart*	DORAN
3. The Re-creation of Brian Kent	*Harold Bell Wright*	BOOK SUPPLY CO.
4. The Arrow of Gold	*Joseph Conrad*	DOUBLEDAY
5. Christopher and Columbus	*"Elizabeth"*	DOUBLEDAY
6. The Undying Fire	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
2. Dangerous Days	*Mary Roberts Rinehart*	DORAN
3. The Re-creation of Brian Kent	*Harold Bell Wright*	BOOK SUPPLY CO.
4. Christopher and Columbus	*"Elizabeth"*	DOUBLEDAY
5. Saint's Progress	*John Galsworthy*	SCRIBNER
6. The Young Visiters	*Daisy Ashford*	DORAN

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GENERAL BOOKS IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The titles have been scored by the simple process of giving each a credit of six for each time it appears as first choice, and so down to a score of one for each time it appears in sixth place. The total score for each section and for the whole country determines the order of choice in the table herewith.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1.	Belgium	*Brand Whitlock*	APPLETON
2.	The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
3.	The Seven Purposes	*Margaret Cameron*	HARPER
4.	Bolshevism	*John Spargo*	HARPER
5.	The History of the Yankee Division	*Harry A. Benwell*	CORNHILL
6.	Joyce Kilmer: Poems, Essays and Letters	*Robert Cortes Holliday*	DORAN

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1.	The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
2.	The New Revelation	*A. Conan Doyle*	DORAN
3.	Belgium	*Brand Whitlock*	APPLETON
4.	The Seven Purposes	*Margaret Cameron*	HARPER
5.	Candles That Burn	*Aline Kilmer*	DORAN
6.	Bolshevism	*John Spargo*	HARPER

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1.	The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
2.	Belgium	*Brand Whitlock*	APPLETON
3.	Raymond	*Sir Oliver Lodge*	DORAN
4.	The Years Between	*Rudyard Kipling*	DOUBLEDAY
5.	The Seven Purposes	*Margaret Cameron*	HARPER
6.	Joyce Kilmer: Poems, Essays and Letters	*Robert Cortes Holliday*	DORAN

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

1.	The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
2.	The New Revelation	*A. Conan Doyle*	DORAN
3.	Raymond	*Sir Oliver Lodge*	DORAN
4.	Power of Will	*F. C. Haddock*	PELTON
5.	The Seven Purposes	*Margaret Cameron*	HARPER
6.	Belgium	*Brand Whitlock*	APPLETON

WESTERN STATES

1.	The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
2.	The Seven Purposes	*Margaret Cameron*	HARPER
3.	An American Idyll	*Cornelia S. Parker*	ATLANTIC MONTHLY
4.	Raymond	*Sir Oliver Lodge*	DORAN
5.	Power of Will	*F. C. Haddock*	PELTON
6.	Belgium	*Brand Whitlock*	APPLETON

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1.	The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
2.	Belgium	*Brand Whitlock*	APPLETON
3.	The Seven Purposes	*Margaret Cameron*	HARPER
4.	Raymond	*Sir Oliver Lodge*	DORAN
5.	The New Revelation	*A. Conan Doyle*	DORAN
6.	The Years Between	*Rudyard Kipling*	DOUBLEDAY

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THE GOSSIP SHOP

THE labor disturbance in the printing industry in New York made it impossible for THE BOOKMAN to be assured adequate and proper production of the November number of the magazine. We therefore decided to cancel the issue. This number bears the date November-December, but all subscriptions will be extended one month so that subscribers will receive the full quota of numbers represented by their subscriptions.

A London booklover writes:

"Francis Gribble has created quite a storm in a teacup by declaring literature to be a back number! One would like to know exactly what he means by 'literature' and also what he means by 'a back number'. In his eyes both 'Mr. Britling Sees It Through' and 'The Pretty Lady' (which perhaps on purpose he calls 'The Painted Lady') are journalism, lacking, that is, that emotional or intellectual appeal which alone gives permanent value to the written word. Mr. Walpole flung back an indignant answer, quoting half a dozen names of both books and writers to prove that Mr. Gribble does not know what he is writing about.

"I cannot help thinking that what Mr. Gribble really meant was something very different from what those who are so angry with him suggest. Whatever may be the case in America, there is no longer in England an instinctive standard of literary taste. There is a larger reading public, and that part of it which prides itself on being better than its fellows exacts a higher technical standard of achievement. But it is an undoubted fact that unless the modern reader belongs to the producing or critical world of letters, literature is no longer to him a vital matter. He does not care, as his forebears cared, for new books and their writers. One proof that this is so is the curious way in which even those new writers who were hailed by the most fastidious of critics as something quite exceptionally remarkable are now at once forgotten unless they go on producing at regular intervals! Were it not invidious to mention names in such a connection, I could quote those of three or four young men who, greeted as successors, almost rivals, to Meredith and Hardy, in the last ten years seem to have completely vanished from the minds of those who built up their original, but very fleeting, reputations!

"It cannot be supposed that Mr. Gribble means that no fine books are written now; for, as Mr. Walpole very rightly points out, beautiful and distinguished work is always being produced. It is curious, however, how often such work, unless already bearing the hallmark of a certain name, is treated as of small account till some happy accident makes it suddenly become appreciated. A case in point is the beautiful writing of W. H. Hudson, who for many years was producing exquisite work with scarcely any encouragement or praise save that afforded by a very small and select circle of readers.

"It is a tribute to literature that Laurence Binyon is about to have a poetical play produced at one of the big London theatres. The play deals

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with King Arthur and his knights, and will be a most interesting experiment. Mr. Binyon is one of the most attractive figures in literary London. He is modest, kindly, and simple in manner. Most people who are in a position to judge, regard him as having written the noblest poem on the war; but to innumerable American visitors to London he is known, not by his name, but as the urbane and courteous head of the Print Room at the British Museum. Mr. Binyon was, I believe, cousin and helpful friend to that ill-fated genius, Stephen Phillips.

"The cynical old saying that any demand produces a supply is certainly true of modern publishing and perhaps it is reasonable that it should be so. The growing interest in spiritualism and in all forms of the occult is producing a great many books which must be of interest to all thoughtful minds. After 'Raymond' and 'Claude's Book', to quote two outstanding instances, we are promised an imaginative study in latter-day occultism by Robert Hichens. In the forthcoming 'Memoirs of Edward, 8th Earl of Sandwich', will be an account of that clever and cultivated nobleman's experience in spiritual healing and other psychical phenomena. Lord Sandwich could not but impress those who had the privilege of his acquaintance as an absolutely high-minded and honorable man, and some years ago he published a curious little book describing some of the strange things which had happened to him.

"Long before the world at large was interested in spiritualism, Mr. Hichens utilized various forms of necromancy in his earlier novels, and never to better purpose than in that wonderful book, 'Flames'. From the occult point of view the most thrilling story in English fiction is Lord Lytton's 'The Haunted and the Haunters; or the House and the Brain'. Lord Lytton was always keenly interested in what he was the first to call the 'Borderland'. His interest was fully shared by his son, the diplomat and poet.

"The death of Weedon Grossmith recalls the fact that he and his brother wrote 'The Diary of a Nobody'. Curiously enough, though the slender little volume found a good deal of favor with the readers of 'Punch', where it appeared serially, it did not make a very great stir on its publication twenty-seven years ago. When the fifth edition was published, in 1910, it suddenly had a well-deserved boom. Three men, who each have a very big literary following and who are extraordinarily different the one from the other, united to give it the highest praise. Letters written by two of them were published as a preface to the 1910 edition. Lord Rosebery wrote that he 'had probably purchased and given away more copies of "The Diary of a Nobody" than any living man', and he added, 'I regard any bedroom I occupy as unfurnished without a copy of it'. Augustine Birrell, poet, essayist, and statesman, went so far as to say, 'I dare not tell you my view of Charles Pooter. I rank him with Don Quixote'. Hilaire Belloc not only singled out the book for the greatest praise in one of his essays, but also confessed that he read and reread the book and never cared to go on a holiday without it. Weedon Grossmith never followed up this great success. In this perhaps he was wise.

"One of the beneficiaries under Mr. Carnegie's will, the stalwart labor-leader, John Burns, is about to publish, so I hear, his reminiscences of men,

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women, and things. He has certainly had a most interesting life, both in his old obscure days, and as a member of the British Cabinet. When he was a member of Parliament he delighted in showing overseas visitors round the two Houses of Parliament. He has an extraordinary knowledge of the history of London; but what will lend a very special value to his book will be a very different kind of history! Namely, the history of what went on during those eventful, anxious days which elapsed between the twenty-seventh of July and August 4, 1914. It will be remembered that he was a member at the time of Mr. Asquith's cabinet and that he was one of the three Johns—himself, Morley, and Simon — who were dead against England's entering the war. He proved the strength of his conviction by following Lord Morley into retirement.

"Lord Grey is perhaps the greatest Wordsworthian living. He has loved and studied the poet from boyhood, and he probably knows 'The Excursion' by heart. His country home is in Northumberland, and thus within reach of the Wordsworth country. Falloden was destroyed by fire not long ago, but I believe I am right in stating that the contents of the house were saved, and especially the many rare and interesting books.

"Lord Grey has several links with contemporary English literature; thus, he was partially educated—and was on terms of the closest friendship—with the late Bishop of London, the noted historian Mondell Crighton. One of Lord Grey's two sisters married Charles Graves, a prominent writer of 'The Spectator' staff, and the author of several brilliant *jeux d'esprit* of which perhaps the most permanent is likely to be 'The Hawerden Horace'.

"Lord Grey's own contribution to literature is of a modest and simple nature, being a little book on fishing—the only sport in which he takes a keen interest; though he was, until his eyes began to be affected, a good shot and an exceptionally fine, real-tennis player. By 'real tennis', I mean the ancient game played in a covered court with very small balls. He has a very intimate knowledge of the ways of all small wild creatures, especially of birds and fishes; and in the company of his most intimate friend, Lord Glenconner, he has gone on many excursions which had for object to discover the ways and habits of the many varieties of water-fowl which are to be found in the wilder Scottish lochs and glens. When he is in London, he is fond of taking the children of his friends to the zoological gardens. He has a very delightful, instinctive sympathy with the child mind.

"To all those interested in the political, the social, and the literary history of Victorian England, it is good news that the life of Lady Dorothy Nevill is shortly to be published. The darling younger friend of Disraeli—he often began his letters to her, 'Little darling',—Lady Dorothy, without being in any way a literary woman, yet knew a great many famous writers. She was, to use an old English expression, 'extremely quick at the uptake', and she had the kind of mind which seems to be able to know all about things without having made a study of them. The writer remembers hearing her discuss, in detail, a much-talked-of novel. So cleverly and interestingly did she talk of the book that several of those present vowed that they would go and buy it at once!

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But after most of the people had gone, Lady Dorothy turned to a friend and said, quite simply, 'I really must get a copy of that book and read it, otherwise I shall feel such an ignoramus among all you clever people!'

"Though a great gossip and a shrewd and amusing talker, her essential kindness of heart prevented her from saying anything spiteful or unkind. She simply did not talk of people she did not like. She always pitied, and, as far as was possible, covered with the mantle of her charity the heroine of a society scandal. One would like to think that her dainty, imaginative ghost haunts the quiet, stately thoroughfares of Mayfair. She was a great walker, and even as a very old lady very rarely took a cab.

A distinguished American poet gentleman has written as follows to:

The Editor of THE BOOKMAN:

In THE BOOKMAN for September I find an essay by Christopher Morley entitled "The Sunny Side of Grub Street". In the course of this article he accuses me of keeping a diary "morocco, tooled, and goffered". This is an infamous and malicious falsehood. It is bound in half levant.

Not satisfied with this base attack, Mr. Morley goes on to say that this particular outraged author must have a large portmanteau in which are contained "the clippings of Mr. Untermeyer's letters to the press taking issue with his critics". This is even more diabolical. Not only have I consistently refused to enter controversies, but I make it a rule never to write any letters whatsoever to newspapers, editors, or magazines. Will you kindly print this letter to establish the truth of the foregoing sentences?

Indignantly yours,
LOUIS UNTERMEYER.

Another Herfordian story. He, Oliver Herford, was in again the other day. He unrolled a little bristol-board which he had in his hand to show the Gossip Shop his latest drawing. And he absent-mindedly put on the desk of the Gossip Shop the rubber band with which he had been keeping the roll rolled. After he had gone we noticed the rubber band still on our desk. Later on he popped in again to tell us something else. But just as he began, his eye lit upon this rubber band. "That", he said, pointing his finger at it, "is mine—I sometimes forget a face but never a rubber band!"

As a matter of interest to readers of THE BOOKMAN, the Gossip Shop prints the following exchange of letters concerning the article, "Books I Have Loved and Lost", by Richard Le Gallienne, in the September number of the magazine:

DEAR SIR:

With reference to that part of your article in the September BOOKMAN, page eight, in which you refer to a certain class of collectors who for mercenary reasons collect the first editions and have them sent stamped and addressed to various authors for autographing or inscribing:

I must protest against the wording of your article. First, I do not believe you can substantiate your suspicion that there is such a practice in vogue either among collectors or dealers. And I am certain that upon reflection and further consideration you will agree that while there are some instances of this, it is bound to occur as in any other phase of life; and your article, being read by a great many authors, is bound to react against those honest collectors and book-lovers who go to the trouble to have desired volumes sent for autographing.

I receive all the catalogues of the Anderson Galleries and American Art Galleries, also notices of auction-room sales, and catalogues of most of the dealers here and abroad. I have failed to note in those catalogues received during the last several years, any number of autographed volumes of living authors. I can recall but one catalogue containing any number of such volumes, with the exception of ———'s sales. I mention his sales as I do not blame you for being provoked, in this instance, to write as you do. I seem to remember that he used a book of yours as a bait. He might have been a collector but not a booklover. I do think he read very few of the books he sent for inscription and the fact that so many of them were not first editions shows that no thought or attention was given in acquiring his collection.

For instance, no one but a real lover of

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Conrad's works would set about acquiring a set which even today costs in the neighborhood of $600 or more complete. I tried both here and abroad to buy some autographed copies of this author's works and the only one I could pick up was the suppressed Preface to "The Nigger of the Narcissus". I thereupon wrote Mr. Conrad asking if he would autograph "Lord Jim", and he on his own initiative offered to inscribe a complete set. To insinuate that I or any other collector would go to this trouble for mercenary reasons is going beyond the truth, and generalizing. The value of a book, especially those of living authors and particularly those on our shores, is not greatly enhanced by having it inscribed, that is, when put up for sale. The value lies wholly in its possession by the person for whom it is inscribed. Authors, of course, can inscribe their books in such a way to preclude their sale if they so desire.

You say you "never find them collecting best sellers with the one exception of Mr. Kipling". I presume, in line with your article, that you mean autographed copies of Mr. Kipling. For your information, this author will not inscribe books except for a contribution to a personal fund. It must also come through his publishers, and one or two books is the limit any collector can have so inscribed.

When I again send a book to any author whose work I esteem and wish to preserve in that state, I am bound to feel apprehensive of the result of the reception even in the mind of the party to whom I address it, because of your article. And I feel that when again contributing an article to THE BOOKMAN or some other journal that is read by collectors and authors, you should be particular to designate just what you mean.

If your article would do any good, I am with you and so are all other collectors and the reputable dealers.

The rest of your article is interesting and only too short.

Yours truly,
GEO. T. KEATING.

MY DEAR SIR:

I am obliged by your letter apropos my article in the September BOOKMAN on "Books I Have Loved and Lost", and am interested in its energetic protest against my remarks on a certain class of mercenary collectors, which I conceive to be "in danger of bringing discredit upon the true brethren".

I have just carefully reread the paragraphs to which you object, side by side with your letter; and, while I am willing to concede that possibly my statement has a sweeping style, calculated to suggest that the class referred to is larger than it is, I must still maintain that the class does exist, and should be recognized as a new genus among bookworms, and sternly discouraged—not so much in the interests of authors, as of such genuine single-hearted collectors as yourself.

I should be sorry indeed if my remarks were to act as you seem to fear they may, and sow suspicion between the writers of good books and the collectors of them; for I may say, I think, that there have been few more ardent collectors than myself, and I have, moreover, in the article in question, paid a tribute to the service done by collectors to the best in literature. Indeed, the debt of literature to the collector is very great, and one which might well form an important chapter in the history of books. For it is the collector who often keeps alight the lonely unvisited flames of those rarer, subtler, or more delicate gifts, which have frequently to shine a long time before they are perceived by the common eye,—if seen by it at all. And the collector, at all events, safeguards their shining, that it may be handed on to those others—that "acute and honorable minority" of all periods—for whom it was perhaps alone intended. Such collectors will not, I believe, be hindered in the pursuit of their innocent pleasure, or the practice of their high calling, by my remarks on that false collector—whose very manner of approach must usually betray him. The writer who is of the kind to be "collected" will instinctively know the difference; and, perhaps, if he is occasionally taken in, it is no great matter. It was really on behalf of the collector himself, rather than of the writer, I repeat, that I made my protest.

Again thanking you for your interesting letter, believe me

Yours very sincerely,
RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

To
George T. Keating, Esq.

Do you know that there is an Elizabethan poet living today? Yes (all Elizabethan poets are not of the Elizabethan period). He lives in Elizabeth, New Jersey. On Bachelor Avenue, to be precise. His name is Peter Lindsay. So we are told by Clarence A. Sharp, editor of "The Country Bard", the autumn number of which has just come to hand. Mr. Lindsay's contribution to this issue of the admirable magazine is entitled "If You Would Be a Man".

The Gossip Shop very much fancies the contributions of "'Sam Simple" and "Joe Queerman", whom the editor describes as having "more sense behind their simplicity and their queer-

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ness than their names would suggest", and says they are "farmers who live close by". "The Country Bard" is published, quarterly, at Madison, New Jersey. Mr. Simple's poem follows:

VERSE LEEBUR

I went away from
Home one day
Lately and
When I came back,
My kid boy
Came a runnin'
To me
With a piece of paper
Wrote all over
With big writin'
And he said
It was a po'm
He had writ.
And he was very much
Excited.
Now he and the
Hired man have been
Ketchin' rats
For twenty-five cents
Apiece,
Which I pay them
To get rid of
The cussed rats.
And it red,
His paper—
He thought I would
Like it because
He knows I try
To write
Po'try.
(Too much.)
And it red,
"Hello, old rat, git
Out of here
Or I will kill
You."
And I red it then
To my wife
And I said to her
"How's this
Any po'try?"
And she said,
"It's 'Verse Leebur'."
Explainin' som'thin'
About a girl
By the name Annie—
I allus liked that name
Annie—
And her last name
Was Loell—
And she said this
Annie Loell
Was the great
Exposer of it
Now-days,
Of this Leebur
And his po'try
I suppose
She meant.
How do you
Like it
Deer Reeder?

THE BOOKMAN has received a copy of the latest edition of the "Desk Standard Dictionary of the English Language", amplified and revised to include the more recent terms that have been absorbed by the language. Here we find *paravane* for the first time in any dictionary, likewise *zero-hour*, and a number of other new terms, such as: *Anzac, Barthelémont, Belleau Wood, Billjim, Blighty, Boche, Bolshevism, Cambrai, Château-Thierry, dud, Foch, Fokker, Haig, jazz-band, Liberty Bond, Pershing, poilu, Rainbow Division, shock troops, slacker, soviet, Vimy Ridge, War Saving Stamp, Scapa Flow*, etc. *Ace* has a new sense, *aptronym* is recognized, *aviatik, blimp, Bolsheviki, camouflage, Cantigny, caterpillar, Cavell, Clémenceau*, and a host of other terms with which reports from the Great War have made us familiar, are included. Later events are indicated by the presence of such words as *Czecho-Slovak, Jugo-Slav, Spartacans, Spartacides.*

Thomas Walsh, poet and critic, and an occasional contributor to THE BOOKMAN, sailed some time in October for Lithuania, via Copenhagen, as the head of a commission for relief work under the auspices of the National Catholic War Council. Mr. Walsh's new volume of poems is called "Don Folquet".

It must be a remarkable exhibition. Doubtless it surpasses in interest anything he did over here. Robert Nichols, the young English poet who

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recently visited this country giving readings from his work and becoming acquainted with our most distinctive poetry (and poets), has since his return home, we hear, been interpreting American poetry to England. His leading feature, it is reported. is a rendering of Nicholas Vachel Lindsay's poem, "The Congo".

Held up for some time by the printing situation is the following interesting letter to the:

EDITOR OF THE BOOKMAN:

I note your adverse comment on my new story, "The Sandman's Mountain", in the September BOOKMAN, in which you point out that Giddy is not a real boy and that the bears in the story are not real bears.

Will you permit a brief reminiscence?

Some twenty-odd years ago when I was stationed in the little walled city of Sulu in the southern Philippines, I made the acquaintance of the Sultan of Sulu. One day he rode into the city to see me and several hundreds of other soldiers. (That was the extent of the acquaintance.) He was a very amusing person, though if he had been less brilliantly clad he might have excited less comment, and his manner of sitting his horse was at least eccentric. He had some sort of stirrups which brought his knees up to a level with his chin. You'd have been sure he would tumble.

Some years later I had the pleasure of seeing the American comedian, Frank Moulan, impersonate the Sultan of Sulu on the stage. He was not at all like the real Sultan. No one could have mistaken the one for the other. Yet he was extraordinarily amusing.

The point I'd like to make is that there is a place for extravagance or fantasy, just as there is a place for realism, or realness, in books as elsewhere.

I cannot feel resentful because you did not like my book, but surely I have a right to look to an influential critical magazine for a valid reason for not liking it. There is, by the way, an eagle who talks and sings in "The Sandman's Mountain", and there are a band of smugglers who pay their chef a diamond a day. Did you find them real?

Yours sincerely,
LOUIS DODGE.

The London journals again contain advertisements of Baedeker Guides. Among the "only volumes" announced by the publishers as "at present obtainable" are: "Belgium and Holland including the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg", 1910; "Italy from the Alps to Naples"; "The Rhine"; "Northern Germany"; "Southern Germany"; "Berlin and Its Environs", and "Paris and Its Environs". The volumes are said to be had "at all good booksellers".

The new New York newspaper, "The Daily News", reported in a recent issue that last week's best sellers at a leading New York bookstore included "Marie Nostrum".

Perhaps it will not be news to many, but it is to us. The Antiquarian Book Company, of Stratford-on-Avon, England, sends us its "Catalogue of Rare Books: No. 17". The prices, we note, are listed not in guineas and shillings or pounds and pence, but in dollars and cents.

In a recent number of "Les Annales", Miguel Zamacoïs imparts to us, among other "impressions of a traveler", the following:

The booksellers repeat to us *ad nauseam* that they are not selling any books. When, before the departure of the train, I beheld the little station bookstalls assailed by purchasers, I understood what an affront to the literary body this unaccustomed avidity marked.

We no longer read save when at an absolute loss as to what to do! Nowadays only prisoners read: those forcibly imprisoned in places of detention or voluntary prisoners in railroad coaches. Furthermore, these two classes of prisoners have recourse to reading only as a last resort, and as the result of persistent insomnia.

Travelers buy a book as one buys a sleep-producing drug. We have, in the book world, the "mauve collection", the "blue collection"; there remain to be created the "lotus collection" and the "poppy collection". But who will consent wittingly to write for this small soporific collection?

Vincent O'Sullivan, in a series of papers which has recently been appearing in the "Mercure de France", has been attempting to induct the French into a more intimate under-

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standing of American literature. In attempting to convey his conception of the flavor of O. Henry, Mr. O'Sullivan says:

Perhaps "La Vie de Bohême" of Murger, some poems of Béranger and of François Coppée, and a few of the tales of Alfred de Musset are the best examples of this *genre* in French.

Mr. O'Sullivan mentions the frequent parallel drawn between this writer and Maupassant, but goes somewhat astray in a brief sketch of O. Henry's life, which he winds up with the rather startling statement: "O. Henry's real name was Taylor".

There has recently appeared, in France, a volume of the letters of Paul Gauguin to his brother painter, Georges Daniel de Monfreid. Gauguin, it is said, is the original of the hero of "The Moon and Sixpence".

Clement K. Shorter, recently in the United States, in one of his recent "literary letters" to "The Sphere" of London, reported that one of the two most popular books in America at the moment was, so he translated the title, "The Four Horses of the Apocalypse".

A new bookstore, the Religious Book Shop, intended as a center for the distribution and sale of religious literature, was recently opened at 349 Madison Avenue. The Association Press acts as the business agent of the new enterprise. The interests of the individual publishers are to be merged in the desire to bring together the books of all publishers. In celebration of the opening of the new store an "editors' dinner" was given by the Association Press at the New York Advertising Club on the evening of September 25. The Gossip Shop ate heartily of the dinner and listened with particular attention to the speeches.

The Gossip Shop acknowledges receipt of a sheet of "Literary Gossip" from one of the foremost New York publishing houses which contains the following note:

Following his successful book on the Peace Conference, the famous cowboy philosopher of the "Follies", Will Rogers, has made another collection of humorous epigrams, this time on the much-discussed problem the "dry" wave that has gone over the nation. The book, to be published immediately, is called "The Cowboy Philosopher on Prohibition". Mr. Rogers has caught many well-known people in the lariat of his humor and there are very few of those serious points that have been knots to the public mind that he does not unravel with his lighthearted philosophy.

Just how Mr. Rogers, by aid of his lariat, unravels the knots in the serious points of his lighthearted philosophy, is a matter of considerable interest to the Gossip Shop.

The death of Leonid Andreyev, the noted Russian writer, was announced in a cable from Finland recently. He died of heart failure as the result of a Bolshevic bomb explosion. Andreyev's four greatest plays are published in an American edition.

T. A. Daly "stuck a feather in his cap and called" his new book "McAroni Ballads". The publishers of the volume are taking over Mr. Daly's earlier books, "Canzoni", "Madrigali", "Songs of Wedlock" and "Carmina", which have already sold tens of thousands of copies. His new publishers contemplate a uniform edition, and hope Mr. Daly will come into his own as a sort of James Whitcomb Riley of the city and its Italian-American and Irish-American people. Aside from these,—

I gotta lov' for Angela
I lov' Carlotta too,—

ditties that elocutionists use all over the country, the new volume contains a strong infusion of poems in straight English.

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